THE LAW OF CHRISTIAN HEALING

DAVID BRUCE FITZGERALD

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The Law of Christian Healing

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Miracles
Christian Healing
Title

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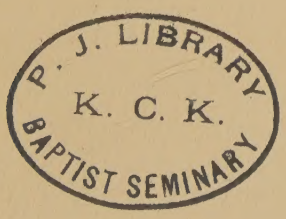


The Law of Christian Healing

I

THE SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY

THERE is in existence an enormous mass of tradition and of testimony bearing on the subject of Christian healing; that is, the curing of disease by the employment of methods which Jesus really or supposedly recommended. Fortunately, the discussion I propose does not demand a preliminary review of this history. It is necessary only to lay a broad foundation by saying that Christianity, throughout its entire existence, has been attended by a record of miraculous cures, either genuine or regarded as such by a considerable number of people.

Every one who accepts the New Testament as authoritative must admit that Jesus was a worker of miracles, and by far the greatest of whom we have any knowledge. The entire course of His ministry was marked by almost daily manifestations of a supernatural power; and the gospel narratives leave us with the impression that this power was most frequently exerted to the end of

healing the sick. The evangelists relate a considerable number of particular instances; and they suggest that these were merely representative examples, selected from a vast multitude of similar cures. Thus: "And Jesus went about all Galilee . . . healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them."—Matt. 4: 23–24.

The figure of Jesus, as it is set before us in the gospels, is not preëminently that of a miracle worker; but, at the same time, we must admit that His personality, as there presented, would be much less impressive if it were disassociated from the mighty works which He did.

The New Testament writings also inform us that the immediate followers of Jesus possessed and exercised the power of healing disease.

Following the date at which the narrative contained in The Acts is broken off, our information becomes less trustworthy; but there is a consensus of opinion on the part of students of church history that the power of miracle working remained in the church for about three centuries after Christ; and it is not difficult to infer that most of the miracles performed by members of

the primitive church were in the nature of restoring the sick to health.

In the medieval church, professions of ability to heal disease were innumerable. Many of the canonized saints of the Roman church claimed to possess this peculiar power; and, though the record has no greater evidential value than that usually assigned to tradition, their methods and their asserted cures are quite worthy of attention by one who is interested in the history of miraculous healing.

In modern times, as is well known, the power to heal disease, either exactly as Jesus healed it or along lines which He recommended, has been claimed by a very large number of individuals, sects and cults. Those Christian people, however, who are in the great majority, and who constitute what we call the modern church, are in the position of neither affirming nor denying the possibility of healing disease by applying to it some distinctively Christian law, power or principle; and, perhaps pending the coming of more light on the subject, the church, as a church, makes no attempt to cure the physical ills of humanity, except as such an attempt is expressed in praying for the recovery of those who are sick. It may be said, however, that a considerable number of Christian people, within the church, do not sympathize with nor endorse this attitude. These Christians so far fall in with all the healing

sects and cults as to claim that the purpose of Christ was the restoration of human nature in its entirety, body, mind and soul; and they ask why the church does not exercise, nor even attempt to exercise, a function which Christ contemplated as belonging to the body of His people. It is not too much to say that thousands of present day Christians hold, with more or less distinctness, that the modern church is untrue to a part of its mission to humanity; and they contend that the church should set about exercising that power of physical healing, which, as they think, Jesus promised to, and conferred upon, His followers.

On the basis of these broad statements, we may proceed to a consideration of what Christian healing is, of how it is effected and of what should be the attitude of the church towards it.

II

JESUS AS A MIRACLE WORKER

BECAUSE they seemed obvious, or because the easiest explanation led in that direction, Christian people have largely taken the truth of certain things for granted. One of these assumptions, for it is purely such, is that Jesus worked miracles for the purpose of proving His divinity. This theory, though long entertained by the church, and probably held by a great majority of present day Christians, seems to have but a slender foundation in the gospel narratives.

Almost invariably, so far as the evangelists inform us, Jesus passed over His miracles without comment and without explanation of why He performed them. He simply did the thing, whatever it was, and left the interpretation of it to the observer. There is, indeed, but one recorded instance in which Jesus explained His reason for working a miracle—that of the paralytic man who was let down through the roof into His presence; and, on this occasion, the reason given by the Master for healing the man was not that He would thus establish a claim to divinity, but that those present might know that

the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins.

Only twice did Jesus, in any way, refer to His miracles as verifications of Himself or His mission; and, at each of these times, He was addressing Himself to minds which were in such a state of indecision and doubt as to be incapable of appreciating anything except a sign or a wonder.

On one occasion, John the Baptist, then in prison, sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" The answer returned by the Master was, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." It is easy to see precisely why Jesus returned such an answer. The situation was one in which nothing else than a narrative of miracles being performed would satisfy or quiet the mind of the doubting and chafing prisoner.

The only other time that Jesus referred to His miracles as verifications was on the occasion reported in John 10:22–39, when the people crowded about Him in Solomon's porch and demanded that He should tell them whether He was the Christ. The Master's reply was, "I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do

in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me." A little later, after the people about Him began to cry out that He was a blasphemer and to show distinct hostility, Jesus, repeating the same thought, said, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." A careful consideration of these remarks will show that in each of them there is something distinctly deprecatory of miracles as proofs by which Jesus expected to support His claims. The idea in His mind evidently was that He should be believed in for quite other reasons, and that He made an appeal to His works only because He was addressing people who had shown themselves absolutely incapable of appreciating the force of these other reasons.

We may then, with great assurance, say that the gospels do not represent Jesus as appealing to His miracles to verify His divinity or as asking men to have faith in Him, primarily, because He did wonderful things in their presence. The actual representation is that Jesus referred thus to His miracles only after every other argument had failed of effect.

Many of the attitudes of Jesus go to confirm this view. If it was His purpose to prove Himself divine by the marvellous nature of His works, there were occasions when He adopted

measures which distinctly tended to the defeat of such a purpose; as when He healed sick people and enjoined them to say nothing about it. If, in these instances, Jesus was verifying His divinity, He also, strangely enough, carefully guarded the verification from the knowledge of men.

It may, however, be sufficient to point out that whenever Jesus referred to wonderful works He did so in a more or less deprecatory way, assigning them to a subordinate position and, sometimes in so many words, warning His hearers against regarding them as foundations of faith. Thus, talking with a certain nobleman of Capernaum, Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (John 4:48). The reproof conveyed in these words is unmistakable. Again (Matt. 16:1–4) addressing the Pharisees and Sadducees, who had asked Him to show them a sign, Jesus said, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Here, the Master evidently intended to convey the idea that if those to whom He was talking represented a higher type of thought and life they would not be inclined to put the emphasis on any such thing. On the occasion when the seventy returned elated, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name," the reply of Jesus was, "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice

because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10 : 17–20). This can be interpreted only as a distinct warning against the mistake of putting wonderful works in a position of first, or even great, importance.

It seems evident to one reading the New Testament that Jesus, in unreported talks with the twelve, must have been at some pains to impress upon them that they should not overestimate the importance of miracles. It would be natural to expect that men, not thus instructed, and endowed with the power of doing wonderful works, would, as soon as they were thrown upon their own responsibility, at once proceed to establish their doctrines by performing a very large number of miracles. But the exact opposite of this is what actually happened. A reference to the book of The Acts shows that the apostles performed not many, but exceedingly few, miracles. They devoted themselves not to healing diseases but to preaching the gospel. There were, it is true, times when the matter of healing came to the front and when some of the apostles, temporarily, occupied themselves in this way; but these seem to have been occasions when it was pressed upon them by those acquainted with the power they possessed; and it is noticeable that, as the narrative of The Acts proceeds, accounts of miracles become fewer and fewer.

We may also observe that the apostles, at supreme or critical moments, did not resort to miracle working to support or defend their claims or themselves. Thus, Paul was perfectly familiar with the possibility of healing in the name of Christ. He had himself been the subject of such a miraculous cure, his sight having been restored by the laying on of hands of a disciple. A number of things in the biography of Paul serve to show that he was conscious of powers which transcended those of ordinary men; but when this apostle stood before Agrippa he endeavoured to convince the king by argument, and not by working a wonder; and his attitude was the same on the occasion when he preached to the incredulous citizens of Athens.

The book of The Acts, indeed, plainly shows that while the apostles possessed a miracle working power, very similar to that of Jesus Himself, they closely imitated their Master in assigning to this ability a subordinate place and in declining to appeal to it as a verification of their claims and doctrines.

This view compels us to modify the interpretations which, popularly, have been put on certain New Testament passages; and a considerable number of such passages, on their very face, demand such modification. A single example will perhaps be sufficient. Jesus, on one occasion, said to His disciples, " The works that I do

shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do." A very large number of Christians understand this as referring to miracles or, more specifically, to the healing of disease. But when we recall the character of Christ's miracles and cures—that He healed the most inveterate and hopeless cases of congenital blindness, of deformity, of paralysis, of leprosy and that He restored the dead to life—the impossibility that the disciples should do anything more remarkable becomes apparent. If Jesus, in this passage, was referring to miracles of healing, He was obviously promising to His followers something which was not even imaginably possible of realization by them; and, as a matter of record, the apostles never performed miracles which were, in any sense, more remarkable, or which could be called "greater," than those of their Master. The unavoidable conclusion is that Jesus, on this occasion, was not referring to miracles or healings, but to some larger things pertaining to His kingdom.

But if Jesus did not work miracles to furnish proofs or verifications, what was His purpose? If we determine the central idea in the Master's mind—the idea on which He supremely and constantly dwelt and about which He placed all His acts and teachings—we may answer this question in a perfectly satisfactory way. The most cursory examination of the gospel narratives serves

to show that the central idea in the mind of Jesus was that of the kingdom of God and of His own redemptive work in bringing men into this kingdom. Absolutely without exception, every teaching and parable of Christ bore on the kingdom. In a variety of ways, He explained and illustrated what this kingdom was and where it was, the way to enter it, the advantage of belonging to it, the general character—as well as particular phases—of the life which prevailed in it. With Jesus, everything was the kingdom and the kingdom was everything. And if every word of the Master was directed to a certain end, may we not, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, assume that every work of His was directed to the same end? We will understand Christ's purpose in His miracles if we consider them precisely as we consider the parables—as illuminations thrown on the kingdom of God.

To cite a very few illustrative examples of this, we may interpret the miracle at Cana as intended to show that, in the kingdom of God, life was not destitute of exuberance and joy; the tempest was stilled, not for the purpose of exhibiting power over meteorological conditions, but to the end of assuring believers that if He was with them they need not be apprehensive under any circumstances; the miracle of multiplying the loaves and fishes was for the purpose of teaching that those who followed Him, even into apparently desert

places, should not come to want, and may be regarded as a dramatic representation of the truth contained in the saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all needful things shall be added unto you."

Obviously, we may, with perfect satisfactoriness, interpret Christ's miracles of healing in this same way. They were illuminations thrown upon the kingdom of God, upon the character of life in the kingdom and upon Christ's own ability to bring men into the kingdom. When the Master opened the eyes of a blind man, He represented in an act the truth which He enunciated when He said, "I am the light of the world." When He restored a dead man to life, He represented in an act the truth which He uttered when He said, "I am come that they might have life." In a word—for it is not my intention under this heading to be anything more than suggestive—Jesus cured men of their physical ailments for the purpose of powerfully impressing upon the human mind the fact that there are no ills pertaining to life in the kingdom of God and that it was through Him that men might expect to be lifted into life of this desirable kind.

It may be pointed out that Christ's miracles of healing were vastly larger in number than would have been necessary to illustrate and enforce the truth He wished thus to convey; but it would be unfair to what we know of the character of Christ

to say that He did not often heal the sick purely out of compassion and with no purpose beyond that of giving them a practical expression of His sympathy. All those cures which are grouped by the evangelists and which, in a shadowy way, are sketched into the background of the gospel narratives were probably intended to be nothing more than charities.

The above considerations seem to show conclusively that Jesus did not regard miracles as an integral or essential part of His system and that He did not think of them as proofs or demonstrations of truth. He evidently did consider them valuable as means of illustrating the various phases of the truth He taught and also as benevolences, expressive of His compassion for human suffering. And this, we may observe, was the attitude which He might have been expected to take. The idea that divinity needs, or imaginably could need, the support of thaumaturgy is a crass one, belonging to a somewhat primitive stage of religious thought.

Another pure assumption on the part of many Christians is that the miracles of Jesus were violations, or at least suspensions, of natural laws. There are, indeed, many devout people who could with difficulty, if at all, be convinced that a miracle was worthy of the name if it could be shown that it was brought about by the agency of any existing force; though why any one should take

this view is absolutely incomprehensible. The vague feeling that the Master would be shorn of something of His power by the intervention of anything between Him and the effects He produced has no more substantial foundation than a similar feeling touching any other work of any other worker would have. An artist is not less an artist because he uses a brush, instead of putting the colours on the canvas with his fingers; and the demonstration of the fact that Jesus used existing forces for the performing of His miracles would detract nothing either from the wonder of the work or from the personality of the worker. There are, indeed, some curiously blurred and contradictory views of truth existing in the Christian mind; and, among these, must be counted the strange notion that, while one of the ways in which God shows Himself to be God is by the immutability of natural laws, one of the ways in which Christ showed Himself to be the Son of God was by the violation of natural laws.

I am here going to make a remark which is somewhat in the nature of an interpolation. It is that, probably, much religious and philosophical thinking is confused because the term "natural law" is not clearly understood and precisely applied. I have often heard men of considerable scientific attainments refer to natural laws as producing certain physical effects; and it is likely that many people make

this same bewildering application of the term. Let us, then, understand clearly that the impulses which exist in the universe are not laws, but forces; a law being merely an expression of the intensity of a force or of the direction in which it invariably moves. The planets are kept in motion not by the law of gravitation, but by the force of gravitation; the law simply determining the orbits in which they move. I have no doubt that the term "natural law" bewilders, and even frightens, many good people because they do not understand exactly what it means; and these will find both clarification of thought and a renewed assurance in the statement that "natural law" does not represent anything which really exists. Such a law is nothing more than a formula which expresses the intensity of a force and the direction in which it moves. The force is the thing which exists.

For the purpose of this discussion, the existing forces of the universe may be divided into two classes:

1. Natural forces; including all those with which we are acquainted, and which we call natural for no other or better reason than because we are acquainted with them.

2. Supernatural forces; which we designate as such simply and solely because we are not acquainted with them; for it must be noted

that whenever any supernatural force brings itself to our attention in a way which enables us to observe the method of its working and to formulate its law it ceases to be supernatural and becomes natural. Supposedly supernatural forces have repeatedly been subjected to this reclassification.

Now, whenever the human mind is conscious of ignorance, it endeavours to conceal its ignorance behind an assumption of knowledge; and, knowing absolutely nothing of supernatural forces, religious thinkers have always assumed to know that there is but one existing supernatural force, which is the pure volition of God, working immediately and not by the use of agencies, and bringing about results by a direct exercise of divine energy.

But even if it were possible, which it is not, to show that there is a distinct line of demarcation between the natural and the supernatural and that they represent entirely different spheres of existence, we would still be unable to regard the above view as anything more than a mere assumption, altogether unsupported by evidence. Purely as a matter of logic, we would be perfectly justified in assuming the exact contrary and in asserting that the direct volition of God is not the only supernatural force; this without argument and merely because we happen to prefer this view. However, it is not necessary

that we shall regard this as a mere assumption. The theory that a considerable number of supernatural forces exist, and that the direct relationship of God is with these forces, rather than with the phenomena they produce, is supported both by analogy and by inference. So far as we know anything of God, He employs forces to accomplish results and does not bring about ends by a direct exercise of His divine energy ; and if this is true within the field of our observation, we may argue that it is also true in the territories which lie outside this field. There is also an observed relationship and interpenetration of the natural and the supernatural, which is shown (1) by the ability of a supernatural force, primary or secondary, to accomplish results on the plane of the natural, as in the case of miracles, and (2) by the fact that many of the forces which the human mind once assigned to the sphere of the supernatural have become natural, merely by becoming known. These considerations strongly suggest that the words natural and supernatural do not represent distinct spheres, but only lower and higher gradations, of existence ; one reality, to the widely separated sides of which we have assigned different names. But if there is this interpenetration of the natural and the supernatural—if they shade into each other by gradations which we cannot clearly define—we may, with consider-

able confidence, affirm that the supernatural side of things is a realm of law; that it is energized by forces which work according to formulas which we might, if the opportunity were given us, determine; and it follows that these forces are quite as distinct from the pure and direct volition of God as are the natural forces of gravitation or cohesion. It follows also that, if the natural and the supernatural are but the two sides of the same reality, the universe, there will be, as between natural and supernatural forces and laws, the same perfect adjustment and harmony that we observe in the relationships of all known forces. Physical forces, as we are aware, cross and recross the universe in all imaginable directions, but there is no interference of one with another, there is no catastrophe such as occurs when railroad trains come into collision; and it is not difficult to include supernatural forces in this conception of universal equilibrium.

We may choose, then, between two theories of how, in a general way, Jesus worked His miracles.

1. We may assume that He produced ends by a direct exercise of divine energy, which moved to its object along the shortest possible line and which thrust aside, suspended or turned back the operation of any natural forces which stood in the way or which opposed the purpose

He had in mind. In this view, Christ's miracles were violations of natural law.

2. We may assume that Jesus produced ends by the employment of existing forces, which were familiar to Him, which He knew how to use and which we call supernatural simply because we are unacquainted with them.

The first of these views is purely an assumption. I have called the second also an assumption. So far as we have progressed in our discussion, it is unsupported by any direct evidence. To this point, I have tried to do nothing more than show that this second view seems the more satisfactory because it is supported by analogy and inference; in other words, because it is more in harmony with the entire body of human knowledge and experience.

It does not, however, necessarily follow that this second view must remain a mere assumption. If it can be shown that Jesus, in working His miracles, or any of them, appeared to employ an existing force; and if, further, it can be shown (1) that this force can be named and described; (2) that this force was adapted to bringing about the end actually produced; and (3) that this force was of an intensity commensurate with the observed effect; if all this can be demonstrated it will go far to remove the theory I have adopted from the realm of mere assumption to that of ascertained fact; and it is my pur-

pose in this discussion to attempt such a demonstration.

At the very outset, two things present themselves as self-evident:

1. That as the miracles of Jesus covered a very wide range and were performed in distinctly different natural spheres, it is necessary to suppose the employment not of a single force, but of a number of forces, each adapted to the production of the particular end which the Master had in view. We cannot in our thinking identify the force which stilled a storm on the sea of Galilee (a miracle in the realm of meteorology) with that which caused a fig tree suddenly to wither (a miracle in the realm of botany). If Jesus did wonderful works by the employment of existing forces, it is necessary to assume the existence of a considerable number of such forces.

2. It is also apparent that, at least in our present state of knowledge, we cannot even remotely imagine the nature of the forces which Jesus used in the working of many of His miracles. Thus, we can form no conception whatever of what, or what kind of, a force would be adequate or adapted to produce an instantaneous change of water into wine, or to cause loaves of bread to multiply, or to quiet a tempestuous atmosphere.

It does not, however, follow that, because we

fail to discern the force operating in one miracle, we must remain ignorant of that which operated in another miracle. In the realm of nature, we are much better acquainted with the forces which prevail in some than in other departments. Thus, the force which produces crystallization is much more remote from our comprehension than that which is active in vaporization. Familiar as we are with the phenomenon of crystallization, the agency which produces it is so elusive that science has not even assigned it a name; while, on the other hand, heat, the agency in vaporization, is one of the best understood natural forces, and its laws have been determined with accuracy. In the same way, we may be absolutely ignorant of the force employed in the production of one miraculous event, and may, at the same time, have a more or less complete comprehension of the force employed in the production of another event which is similar to the first only in the point of being miraculous, being in all other respects widely different.

The proposition I shall attempt to sustain is that touching Christ's miracles of healing, and only these, we are not entirely ignorant of the force He employed, nor of its laws; that, in other words, we can assign it a name and can determine its adaptability to and its commensurateness with the effect produced. However, we are not yet prepared to do this.

It may serve the ends of clearness if, in closing this chapter, I define and illustrate what I mean by a supernatural force.

1. It should be understood that I do not intend the word supernatural to cover the existence of God, and that by the term supernatural force I do not refer to the direct volition of God. There is, it is true, a sense in which God may be spoken of as supernatural, that is, above nature; but as a description of God, or as a definition of His relationship with the universe, the word, as thus used, is quite as vague as the term non-natural would be; and it is probably quite as true that God is above the supernatural as that He is above the natural.

2. By the term supernatural force I do not mean one the operation of which necessarily eludes observation, but merely one the law of which has not been scientifically determined. If we admit miracles as veritable, we must admit that a considerable number of supernatural forces have been observed in the same way that we observe natural forces, which is by noting the effects produced. But, in respect to supernatural forces, this observation, in most cases, has not been extensive enough to enable us to name the force or to determine its intensity. Excluding the direct volition of God from consideration, I do not think it possible to make any distinction between a natural and a supernatural force

beyond saying that we know the law of the one and do not know the law of the other. To go further than this, by attempting to introduce other differentiating elements, does not make for clearness. Thus, we cannot by referring to the origin of forces draw any distinction between those which are natural and those which are supernatural. For anything we know, gravitation may, and probably does, as truly originate in the supernatural as did the force which Jesus used in turning water into wine at Cana. My personal belief is that all forces, ultimately, originate in the volition of God and that neither science nor religion can, even imaginably, assign to them any other origin; but it does not follow from this that God is identical with the supernatural or that His will is the only supernatural force or that any observed effect, however marvellous it may appear, is produced by a direct exercise of His divine energy.

3. As an illustration of what I mean by a supernatural force I will take Faith.

It is obvious that Jesus used the word faith in two distinct senses. Sometimes He employed it, as is now the general usage, as a synonym for belief. Thus when the Master said to the centurion, "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel," He was plainly referring to a certain belief which existed in the mind of this Roman officer; and the same interpretation applies to

the use of the word in the remark to the Syrophœnician woman, "Great is thy faith."

But at other times, Jesus used the word faith as referring to a force which, if applied to such ends, would accomplish certain physical results. Thus, on the occasion when Peter attempted to walk on the water and, becoming fearful, began to sink, the Master said to him, "O, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Here, Jesus was evidently thinking of faith as a force which would enable a man to walk on the surface of the sea as on dry land.

On another occasion, Jesus said to His disciples, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye should say to that mountain, Be ye removed to yonder place, or be ye cast into the sea, and it would obey you." Here, the Master was thinking of faith as a force which, exerted even in moderate measure, would produce a very remarkable physical effect. The attempt to explain this passage as a hyperbole, by which Jesus sought to illustrate the great efficiency of faith in another and spiritual department, seems most unsatisfactory. There is not in the structure or setting of the saying the slightest suggestion that it was a mere figure of speech. On the contrary, the text plainly conveys the idea that Jesus, when He uttered this saying, supplemented it by a gesture which directed attention to a visible mountain; and, certainly, those to

whom He was speaking could have understood Him to refer only to this mountain and to nothing else.

After all, why should we balk at such an obstacle as this passage seems to present? It is really just as easy to believe that an unseen force called faith is competent to cast a mountain into the sea as it is to believe that another unseen force called gravitation can swing a planet around the sun. If the existence of these forces be admitted at all, then the only possible distinction which the human mind can make between them is that the intensity of gravitation can be expressed in a mathematical formula and the intensity of faith cannot; and this would seem rather a slender basis on which to admit the ability of the one to do an astonishing thing and to deny that a similar ability resides in the other. But we can draw no other distinction than the one I have indicated. The question, What is the force called gravitation? is quite as unanswerable as is the question, What is the force called faith?

It may be pointed out that the force called faith has not been observed scientifically. But it is precisely for this reason that I have selected it as representative of so-called supernatural forces. When, if ever, it is scientifically observed, and its direction and intensity determined, it will cease to be supernatural and will

take its place among the natural energies of the universe. At present, faith, which Jesus spoke of as commensurate to the removal of a mountain from its place, must be regarded as a supernatural force; this solely because we are unable to indicate the direction in which it moves or to express its intensity in a formula. This inability on our part is all that makes it supernatural; for, as we must remember, the most exhaustive scientific investigation can hope to determine nothing more than the law of a force. Science has never given us the faintest glimpse into the essence or constitution of forces; and, therefore, we cannot in this way differentiate them.

It should be understood that, in the above illustration, I merely assume the existence of a force which, per se, may be designated by the word faith, and that I do not assert its actual existence. Everything that Jesus said about faith will harmonize quite as well with the theory that it is an agency which looses, or frees, a force as it will with the view that faith is essentially, and in itself, a force.

III

JESUS AS A HEALER

IN considering Christ's miracles of healing, three important inquiries present themselves at the outset. These are:

1. What Jesus said about His miracles, including those of healing.

2. The way in which Jesus appeared to heal disease.

3. The question of whether, on the basis of what Jesus said and of what He appeared to do, we can formulate a satisfactory theory of how He effected His cures.

1. Taking up the first of these inquiries, absolutely the only explanation which Jesus gave of His wonderful works was to refer them distinctly to the power of God. Apparently that there should be no mistake on the point, He repeated this a number of times.

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do."—John 5 : 19.

"I can of Mine own self do nothing."—John 5 : 30.

"I do nothing of Myself."—John 8 : 28.

"The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."—John 14 : 10.

I have no intention of attempting to discuss the metaphysics of these statements. It is not essential that we shall determine how, or in what degree, or in what manifestation or personality of Himself, God was in Jesus. We need not here go beyond the Master's obvious intention of discriminating between Himself as a man and Himself as God, or as having an indwelling of God.

We may presume that those to whom these statements were addressed were not clear on the point of how Jesus, who appeared to be a man and whose relationships with them were on the human plane, was yet God; and the Master, therefore, with considerable particularity and emphasis, pointed out to them that it was not He, the man, who did the wonderful works, but that they must be referred to the power of God, whom He described as dwelling in Him.

We may, indeed, without doing the least violence to any law of interpretation, understand these statements of Jesus as disclaiming ability, on the purely human side of His nature, to work miracles and as asserting that it was absolutely necessary to suppose the indwelling of God in Him to account for them. This is as far as we need go; but the reader is asked to observe that this, which is absolutely the first light we have obtained on the method of miracle working, is very important, as will later appear.

The conclusion, then, which we derive from the statements of Jesus may be presented thus:

(1) Human nature, even in its most highly developed form, which we may take to be represented by Jesus Himself, is not competent to originate a force commensurate to working a miracle.

(2) The force which works a miracle originates in, and proceeds from, God.

It may be noted that this conclusion does not invalidate, and is not in any way out of harmony with, the theory that God does not work even a miracle by a direct exercise of energy and without the employment of intermediate agencies or forces.

2. Taking up now the second of our inquiries, we may ask the way in which Jesus appeared to heal disease; it being understood that here we are not to go behind the narratives of the observers.

It may, of course, be said that, in any account of a miracle, we cannot be sure that the gospels give us a complete statement of everything Jesus said and did. The points brought out are those which impressed themselves on the minds of the disciples. Thus, in the case of Malchus, it is perfectly possible that Jesus spoke to the man, and that the disciples, in the excitement of the moment, did not observe this or did not overhear what He said. The one thing they observed was that the Master touched the man's ear. We

cannot, however, base conclusions on any such suppositions, but only on what we actually find in the narrative.

Including those of raising the dead—which I see no reason to exclude from this heading—the gospels give more or less circumstantial accounts of twenty-six miracles of healing performed by Christ. As it will serve to bring out the points I wish to make clear, I will tabulate these miracles on the basis of variations in the method which Jesus employed.

1. Those in which the narrative gives no hint of the method which Jesus employed; that is, of what He said and did.

(1) The healing of the dumb demoniac, at Capernaum.

(2) The healing of the dropsical man, at Jerusalem.

(3) The healing of the blind and dumb demoniac, in Galilee.

2. Those in which the person healed was not in the immediate presence of Jesus.

(1) The healing of the nobleman's son, at Cana.

(2) The healing of the Syrophœnician woman's daughter, at Tyre.

(3) The healing of the centurion's servant, at Capernaum.

3. Those in which the narrative represents Jesus as saying nothing to the patient, but healing merely by a gesture.

(1) The healing of Peter's mother-in-law, at Bethsaida.

(2) The restoration of Malchus' ear, in Gethsemane.

4. Those in which Jesus simply assured the patient that disease had departed; with no narrative of accompanying acts or gestures. There is but one miracle which falls in this class.

(1) The healing of the woman with an issue of blood, at Gennesaret.

5. Those in which, at the precise moment of performing the miracle, Jesus did not refer to the illness or condition of the patient, but merely directed the person to do something which implied restored health or life. It may be noted that in three of these cases Jesus conversed with the patient previous to the actual performance of the miracle; and in two others He used gestures, which, however, seemed to have no direct bearing on the working of the miracle.

(1) The healing of ten lepers, at Samaria.

(2) The healing of the impotent man, at the pool of Bethesda.

(3) The healing of the man sick of the palsy, at Capernaum.

(4) The healing of the man with a withered hand, at Capernaum.

(5) The raising of Jairus' daughter, at Capernaum.

(6) The raising of the widow's son, at Nain.

(7) The raising of Lazarus, at Bethany.

6. Those in which Jesus combined words (not commands) with gestures or acts; these latter, in certain cases, being somewhat elaborate.

(1) The healing of two blind men, at Capernaum.

(2) The healing of a blind man, at Bethsaida.

(3) The healing of the woman with an infirmity, at Jerusalem.

(4) The healing of the man born blind, at Jerusalem.

(5) The healing of a leper, at Gennesaret.

(6) The healing of blind Bartimæus, at Jericho. (The narratives of this miracle vary in the first three gospels. Matthew speaks of two men, and says that Jesus touched their eyes. Mark and Luke note only one man, and say nothing of the gesture.)

7. Those in which Jesus uttered a direct command; this, however, being invariably addressed not to the patient, but to the disease.

(1) The healing of the demoniac in the synagogue, at Capernaum.

(2) The healing of the demoniac, at Gadara.

(3) The healing of the demoniac child, at Mt. Tabor.

8. Those in which Jesus combined a direct command with gestures or acts. There is but one miracle which falls in this class.

(1) The healing of the deaf and dumb man, at Decapolis.

Before proceeding further, I feel the necessity of defending my judgment in placing the miracles of raising the dead in class five of the above tabulation. As I am aware, the generally accepted idea is that, in these miracles, Jesus spoke to the dead person and commanded him to return to life. The narratives, however, do not show anything of this kind; and it is only by strongly forcing an interpretation that any such notion can be derived from them. In each of the three detailed instances of raising the dead, the accounts represent Jesus as using words which could have been addressed only to a living person and which merely directed him or her to do something which a living person easily might do. The phrases which Jesus employed on these occasions were: "Lazarus, come forth"; "Young man, I say unto thee, arise"; "Maid, I say unto thee, arise." It seems obvious that these words were addressed not to the dead, but to the living; and I therefore conclude, as I think the narrative shows, that, in these cases, Jesus did not speak to the person at all until after the moment of resuscitation. In other words, and as I interpret it, Lazarus was a living man before Jesus said "come forth." The discussion of the significance of this must be postponed. At present, I am contending only for a certain reading,

which seems to be the plain and straightforward one.

Our tabulation of the miracles, on the basis of the method, or variations of method, which Jesus employed, enables us to make some interesting, and perhaps significant, observations.

We may note:

1. That in every case which, even supposedly, may be taken to represent nervous disease, Jesus employed the method which is numbered five in the table.

2. That in every case of blindness, Jesus employed the method which is numbered six in the table.

3. That in every case of demoniacal possession, Jesus employed the method which is numbered seven in the table.

4. That in proportion to the obstinacy or deeply seated character (as it would seem to us) of a disease, the method which Jesus employed became more direct and forcible; the one striking exception to this being in the miracles of raising the dead; and I shall hereafter attempt to show the reason for this.

The above observations will perhaps serve to convince us that Jesus did not go about working miracles of healing in a haphazard way, saying or doing anything that chanced to occur to Him at the moment; that, on the contrary, He worked along the line of a method, which was very well

defined in His own mind and to which He appeared to attach considerable significance. This is equivalent to saying that Jesus, in these miracles, at least seemed to apply some sort of a law to the healing of disease and to exert His power along the line indicated by the law. If He did not do this, there is no imaginable reason to account for the fact that He varied His method in order, apparently, to adapt it to different diseases. One who works with no reference to a law has no need of a method; and one who uses a method thereby shows that he has a law in mind.

There are several considerations which, though unconvincing in themselves, serve to support the conclusion that Jesus, in His miracles of healing, at least seemed to use a well defined method, which He varied according to the character of the disease which He wished to cure.

As examples of these considerations, we may refer:

1. To the fact that, in treating cases of blindness, Jesus sometimes applied clay to the eyes of the person to be healed. If we admit that the Master had a method, and regard this use of clay as a variation of His method, intended to make it apply more effectively to cases of blindness, it is easy to understand this. If, on the other hand, we deny that Jesus had a method of healing, and contend that He cured by a direct exercise of

volitional energy, we can imagine no reason for the use of the clay. If the application of the clay had no significance, then its employment was a mere mummery and we would be obliged to regard it as quite unworthy of Jesus.

2. Another fact which seems to support the conclusion that Jesus had a method of healing is that, in raising the dead, He invariably placed Himself in close proximity to the body of the deceased person, and that, apparently, He insisted on this proximity. This may be noted in the case of the daughter of Jairus, where the Master went to the house before attempting to perform the miracle. It is, however, much more strongly brought out in the case of Lazarus, where Jesus walked some eighty miles, with no other apparent purpose than that of placing Himself in proximity to the tomb in which the body of the dead man lay. It may, of course, be urged that this long journey was prompted merely by the sentimental consideration of wishing to be present when Lazarus emerged from the sepulchre; but this is not an explanation which appeals strongly to the mind. It is much easier to suppose that Jesus had a definite reason for making the journey and that this reason was one which had a bearing upon the restoration of Lazarus to life. And if Jesus did thus insist on proximity before attempting to perform the miracle of raising the dead, there could have been but one reason for it

—that it was associated with the application of a method and was important in making the method more effective. The statement that Jesus insisted on placing Himself within speaking and hearing distance of a corpse before attempting to reanimate it will seem strange to those who think of a miracle as due to the direct volition of God; but this element of strangeness disappears if we regard a miracle as worked by the employment of an existing force, and if we remember that there is no known force which cannot be used more effectively by placing oneself in a favourable position; the same, presumably, being true of all unknown forces.

I wish now to refer back to our table of the miracles of healing in order to ask whether, running through all Christ's variations of method, we can discover any common factor. Can we fix on anything He did not once or twice or half a dozen times, but invariably? If we can, we may then regard that thing, whatever it may be, as the thing which Jesus, mentally, elevated to a position of importance. We can, of course, in trying to find this common factor, take into account only those cases in which what Jesus said and did is reported.

We may observe then:

1. That Jesus did not invariably use gestures.

2. That He did not invariably speak to the patient.

3. That He did not invariably address the disease.

4. That He did not invariably refer to the patient's illness.

5. That He did not invariably use the imperative.

By this process of elimination, which I have not attempted to make complete, we easily arrive at a determination of the one thing which Jesus invariably did; which was, somehow, to convey to the sick person the idea of health, the suggestion of recovery.

In this connection, we may make two observations:

1. That the idea which Jesus offered to those whom He healed was nothing more than a suggestion. The notion that He commanded disease to disappear is not borne out by the narratives. There are but four recorded cases in which the Master spoke to the disease, or to the patient, imperatively.

2. We may feel sure that Christ's variations of method were not noted by those whom He restored to health. It did not occur to any one of these people that Jesus was using in his case a formula which differed from that He had used in some other case. The blind, the deaf, the paralyzed, the leprous alike interpreted the attitude of Jesus, including everything He said or did, as simply indicating recovery; the thought

of those who had been cured being represented by that of the blind man who being pressed, after his sight had been restored, to say what he thought of the miracle, replied, "This one thing I know: whereas I was blind, now I see."

Touching Christ's miracles of healing then, we may conclude:

1. That the one thing which Jesus invariably did was to suggest to the patient, either by word or gesture, the end which He wished to bring about; the sick person, in every case, interpreting what the Master said or did as thus suggestive.

2. That in proportion as the case was grave and therefore, as it would appear to us, difficult, Jesus, either by raising His voice (as in the case of Lazarus) or by touching the patient or by combining words and gestures, intensified the force of the suggestion He made.

3. We may now take up the third of our inquiries, asking whether, on the basis of what Jesus said of His miracles and of the way in which He appeared to work them, we can formulate a satisfactory theory of how He effected His cures.

A purely surface view would incline us towards an acceptance of the theory that Jesus worked His miracles of healing by implanting in the mind of the patient a suggestion of renewed health; this suggestion, in any case, being of sufficient force to counteract the disease and

thus restore the person to a normal physical state. In this view, the healing miracles of Jesus were examples of what has been called "the power of mind over body."

There are, however, a number of considerations opposing this view. The chief of these, and perhaps the only one we need take into account, is that, while the mind exercises a tolerably complete control over the muscular system, there is no reason to suppose that it exercises a control over the vital organs, or their functions, such as would be commensurate to restoring them from a diseased to a healthy condition. I am only putting this in another way when I say that neither anatomy nor psychology has established anything more than a somewhat remote relationship between what we call the mind and the involuntary physical functions, such as respiration and circulation. If we note the very limited way in which, by attention or by an exercise of the will, we can suspend or modify the involuntary act of breathing, we will understand how exceedingly slight this control is.

As supporting the above contention, we may note:

1. That the force which controls the involuntary organs and their functions does not appear to originate in the mind. Purely as a question of consciousness, we are obliged to refer it to some other source.

2. We are aware that the force which controls the vital organs of the body works with greater certainty and precision at times—as during sleep—when the mind does not interfere with it, even in that remote way of which it is capable.

3. The mind, by accident or disease, may be completely obliterated, and yet the force which controls the vital organs of the body may not be affected in the least. Numberless cases have been recorded. In one which fell under my own observation, a brain disease brought the mind of the patient to the state of absolute blankness which is characteristic of infancy; but all the physical functions were performed with absolute regularity, and the general health of the patient seemed to improve in proportion as his mental disease progressed.

4. It is perfectly possible, by an exercise of the will, to set the mind in direct opposition to the force which controls the vital organs; but such an attempt will be ineffective in checking the action of the force.

5. There has been much experimentation with what is known as mental healing; and the entire history of it shows that the power of the mind over the body is entirely inadequate to the production of effects which are at all comparable with the miracles of healing which Jesus performed.

6. The theory of mental healing is absolutely

inadequate as an explanation of raising the dead; there being, in such cases, no conscious mind in which the suggestion of resuscitation could be lodged.

7. The theory of mental healing would be very difficult to apply in cases of lunacy or demoniacal possession, where the mind of the patient might easily decline to accept or act upon the suggestion of healing.

8. It is possible to explain all the phenomena attending what is called mental healing in a much more satisfactory way than by supposing them to be produced by the action of the mind on the vital organs of the body. This will appear in the course of our discussion.

I have not thought it worth while to go into an extensive examination of the theory that Christ's miracles of healing were examples of the power of mind over body; this because the theory is now generally regarded as superficial and entirely inadequate as an explanation. Those who admit that Jesus healed disease do not regard this as the way in which He effected His cures.

We may now sum up our conclusions thus:

1. Jesus, in working His miracles of healing, used a method, which He varied in order to adapt it to different cases.

2. We must suppose that Jesus regarded this method as important.

3. The invariable, and therefore essential, thing in His method was the lodgment of a suggestion of recovery in the mind of the sick person.

4. The fact that such a suggestion of recovery was conveyed to the sick person does not, of itself, explain the person's immediate return to health.

Considering the theory of mental healing excluded, I will now lay down certain very broad propositions which seem to apply to Christ's miracles of healing; it being understood that such of these statements as are not already established will hereafter be discussed.

1. In order to explain the healing miracles—especially the phenomenon of the sick person's immediate recovery—it is necessary to suppose that the verbal (or its equivalent) suggestion of a return to health was not the only thing which passed between Jesus and the patient.

2. This something else, and not the verbal suggestion, was the real curative force.

3. The importance of the verbal suggestion lay in the fact that it coöperated with the real healing force; opening the way for it or, somehow, making it more effective than it otherwise would have been.

4. In any attempted definition of what this real healing force was, we must keep in mind that it was of such a nature that the verbal suggestion could coöperate with it, to the end of making it more efficient.

5. It seems obvious that this real curative force was not the direct volition of God; since, in that case, it would be impossible to assign any importance to the verbal suggestion.

6. We may, then, reasonably suppose that the healing agency which Jesus employed was an existing, though unobserved, energy, which He set in motion and directed to the end of healing disease.

7. This energy, or force, therefore, was one which was adapted to the precise end of healing diseased conditions of the human body.

Is there any known force which complies with the above conditions? I reply, there is. A suggestion of recovery, conveyed on the spiritual plane, and directed not to the conscious mind, but to the soul of the sick person, would, if it were of sufficient intensity, transform itself into a curative force commensurate to the immediate healing of any disease; and, as I shall try to show, this force would be one with which a corresponding verbal suggestion, lodged in the conscious mind of the patient, would coöperate, to the end of making it more effective.

If we regard this as a theory—yet to be established or disproved—of how Jesus worked His miracles of healing, we may, at the very outset, refer to certain facts which make the theory, at least in part, much more than a mere assumption. There are three recorded instances of healing which Jesus performed in which the

sick person was not in His immediate presence; in which, indeed, at the time of the healing, He had never previously seen or heard of the patient. In one of these cases—that of the nobleman's son—Jesus was at Cana and the patient at Capernaum, the two places being separated by some twenty miles. It is obvious that, in these instances of healing at a distance, the curative force passed from Jesus to the sick person on the spiritual plane; and, in so far as this is significant, it directly supports the theory which we are about to examine.

We may also observe that two of the essential points in the theory above set forth are directly supported by the miracles of raising the dead. These points are (1) that the curative force passed on the spiritual plane and (2) that it was directed not to the conscious mind, but to the soul. In these miracles, the person being dead, there was no conscious mind to be taken into consideration, and it is therefore certain that the healing force passed on the spiritual plane and was directed to, or upon, the soul. It is true that, in each of these cases, Jesus spoke to the patient; but, as we have seen, the narratives show that He did not do this until after the moment of resuscitation.

We are now, I think, prepared to take up the more particularized discussion of the various points presented by our theory.

IV

THE HUMAN SOUL

CHRISTIAN thought has never gone much beyond the point of postulating three things about the human soul.

These things are:

1. That the soul exists.
2. That it somehow represents the self.
3. That it is immortal.

It will be seen at once that these propositions, though true, throw no light on the subject of miraculous healing; and, therefore, it will be necessary to learn something more of the soul, of its powers and of its relations with the body.

I use the word soul without apology. This can now be done even in a discussion which purports to have a scientific side to it. Many psychologists now boldly admit the word into their writings; and, unless one is familiar with these writings, he cannot realize how distinctly these investigators recognize the existence of a spiritual side in man and even insist on it as offering the most logical basis for all mental phenomena. The existence of the soul is now more than an article of religious faith. It is a fact accepted by science.

There are, it is true, a considerable number of

psychologists who still look somewhat suspiciously at the word soul; but most of these do not hesitate to speak of the unconscious or subliminal mind; and there is no possible way in which we can discriminate between the subliminal mind and the soul. Absolutely everything which can be affirmed of the one can also be affirmed of the other.

We may observe then:

1. As a preliminary to approaching the soul from the scientific side, we must discard that purely idealistic conception of it which has been so long and widely held; or, in other words, we must cease to regard it as an existence about which nothing can be affirmed. If it is possible to learn anything of the soul by the method of investigation it must be because it presents certain phenomena which can be observed; and there can be no such things as phenomena without a substantial agent producing them. This conclusion is not in the least affected by the fact that the soul is immaterial; for this is only equivalent to saying that it is not composed of the kind of matter with which we are acquainted. This may be admitted; but the admission does not modify the statement that the soul, as the agent in the production of activities, must be regarded as consisting or composed of a substance. If we are disposed to push it to that point, we may even affirm that the soul is material; for we

can draw no mental distinction between substance and matter except by saying that the one is a more rarefied or etherialized form of the other.

2. My second observation is that the soul is not the mind of which we are conscious. This statement is supported by a number of considerations.

(1) Popular philosophy—which is always likely to be right—has never identified the conscious self with the soul. A man may believe in the existence of his own soul, may exalt its importance and may hold that it is the continuing part of himself, but he never thinks or speaks from its viewpoint. Invariably, he refers to it as "my soul"; that is, as an adjunct or possession of the self which is speaking.

(2) Psychology, from a point of view widely separated from that of popular philosophy, reaches a conclusion which is not essentially different. Practically every psychologist who admits the existence of the subliminal mind draws a broad distinction between it and the conscious mind; holding that, whatever may be said of their relationships, the one is not the other.

(3) As I shall attempt to demonstrate later, the mind of which we are conscious can do certain things which the soul cannot do; and, conversely, the soul can do certain things of which the mind is absolutely incapable.

(4) There are certain mental and physical processes which are of constant occurrence, of which we are conscious and for which we can find no origin in consciousness. Thus, we are aware that the brain thinks, that the lungs respire, that the heart beats. In other words, regular, and even rhythmical, nervous impulses are constantly being communicated to us; but the origin of these impulses is nowhere within the field of our consciousness, and their communication seems to be in no way dependent upon the conscious self. It is necessary, therefore, to refer the origin of these impulses to a department of existence of which we are not conscious and thus to differentiate between these departments.

(5) I am aware of no philosophical or religious necessity for identifying the conscious self with the soul. On the other hand, all problems, in either of these fields, become easier of solution if the soul is considered as an existence which is in process of becoming the self and which is destined, finally, to replace the self.

3. My third observation—based roughly on the foregoing considerations, and, more particularly, on others yet to be brought out—is that the soul, in the present state of existence, and under normal conditions, plays no part of which we are conscious in the life. It is, however, most intimately related with the conscious exis-

tence, being the source in which all thought impulses and all vital forces originate and from which they proceed.

It may be asked how, if the truth of the foregoing observation be admitted, we can know anything of the soul scientifically. As the argument contained in this chapter turns on replying to this question in a satisfactory way, I shall first state a theory of how the soul sometimes manifests itself, and shall then attempt to show that this theory is the only one which is scientifically tenable, because the only one which will explain a great variety of phenomena with which we are more or less familiar.

The theory is this :—that the soul, by some inherent and constant force or impulse, is always struggling to become what it will finally be—the self—and, therefore, at any point of weakness or decay in the conscious self, the soul thrusts itself forward with the purpose of asserting its selfhood ; and, in doing this, it presents certain observable phenomena. This is equivalent to saying that in cases of abnormality in the conscious self the direct agency of the soul may be observed as producing certain results ; these results being of such a kind that they cannot be explained except by referring them to the soul. It follows that, by noting these phenomena, we may get some idea of what the powers of the soul are.

That part of this theory which sets forth that activities of the soul can be observed only in abnormal states of the conscious self is now generally recognized as true by investigators of man's spiritual side; and, as we may note, it is quite in line with those theories which have yielded results in other departments of investigation. Thus, practically everything we know about bodily health and its laws has been reached through the study of abnormal (diseased) physical conditions.

We may observe then:

1. The soul manifests itself only in abnormal states of the conscious self.

2. This manifestation will be marked in proportion to the extent of the abnormality.

3. This manifestation will be most observable when the abnormality is of a mental or nervous kind; that is, when it exists in that side of the nature which is in most direct contact with, and under the control of, the spiritual.

If the reader will examine any psychology written a quarter of a century ago, he will discover two things:

1. That the author's system applies only to a mind which is absolutely normal.

2. That the author recognizes the existence of a great variety of mental phenomena which he cannot fit into his system, and which, therefore, he does not attempt to explain.

As examples of such phenomena, I may mention:

1. Extraordinary mental ability in a particular direction, often coexisting with absolute incapacity in all other directions. The musical idiot, Blind Tom, will serve as an illustration.

2. All the mental processes of insanity, as distinguished from idiocy.

3. Many of the peculiar mental processes which accompany, and are characteristic of, hysteria.

4. The mental processes characteristic of, and produced by, cerebral inflammation; as in fevers, alcoholic delirium, etc.

5. The mental processes of sleep; or, perhaps more properly, those which mark the transition between sleep and wakefulness. We may assert with considerable confidence that the sleeping and waking states are normal, but that the transition between the two is a period of abnormality. Nature intends that we shall be in the one condition or in the other.

6. The visualizing of ideas under any circumstances; that is, seeing them as objective realities.

7. The mental processes of the trance state. Certain people possess the ability to inhibit (blot out) the conscious mind; and, in this state, they write and speak.

8. The mental processes of the hypnotic state. This also is a condition in which the conscious mind is, more or less, inhibited (blotted out).

9. The phenomena presented in cases of double or multiple personality. There are people who possess two (or more) personalities, which they assume at different times; each of these personalities being entirely unaware of the other (or others).

10. Thought transference by telepathy.

11. In addition—though not falling strictly under the heading of mental phenomena—I may point out the failure of the old psychologies to explain such things as the extraordinary physical strength often shown in cases of insanity or delirium, the complete physical anesthesia which is the product of a mental state, etc.

I have said that the older psychologies, while recognizing the existence of these peculiar mental activities, had no explanation of them. Really, the same remark applies, with equal force, to most of the recent systems. The chief difference between the older and the contemporary systems of psychology is that in the latter the abnormal mental activities to which I have referred are much more carefully studied and elaborately described. This elaboration is, indeed, often carried to such a point as to create the impression that an explanation has been offered; but, as any one may verify for himself, this is generally not the case. What I mean is, to take an example, that the mental processes of the mathematical prodigy, who can, in ten seconds, reckon the

compound interest on two hundred and thirty-seven dollars for a period of two hundred and thirty-seven years, are made no clearer by the last psychology which came from the printing press than they were by that which was relegated to the shelves a quarter of a century ago. The older psychologies put such a thing as this in a foot-note, and left it there. The newer ones elaborate on it; but leave us equally uncertain on the point of just how the mathematical prodigy does the thing he does.

As another illustration of this, we may take the psychological view of those phenomena which are characteristic of the trance state. We are told that, as the conscious mind is inhibited (blotted out), these phenomena must be referred to the agency of a secondary personality; but we are not told what this secondary personality is, how it happens to be intelligent or how it manages to control the vocal organs or the muscles of the arm and hand. In a word, contemporary psychology does not explain how the person in a trance state does the thing he or she does.

The reader will understand that, as this treatise relates only to the healing of disease, I am not seeking, but trying to avoid, psychological discussion. I shall, therefore, content myself with the broad statement, which any one may easily verify, that no system of psychology which declines to consider a subliminal mind (soul) can

satisfactorily explain any mental process which is characteristic of an abnormal state of the conscious self.

I may say that the psychologists are almost, though not quite, on the border of admitting the truth of this statement. While contemporary psychology distinctly recognizes both a mind and a soul, and draws a distinction between them, it still, with traditional conservatism, declines to cross the border line which separates them. Psychology, therefore, just now, is in the rather unsatisfactory position of contending that the postulate of a soul furnishes the most logical basis for all mental phenomena, and of immediately asserting that, though this may be true, it is not necessary to take the soul into consideration. This reluctance, however, is in process of disappearing; and, when it does disappear, we may expect to have a psychology which will have a profound bearing on the truth of religion.

I shall, then, set up two points as supporting a theory I am about to propose as explanatory of all abnormal mental processes:

1. That it is a satisfactory explanation.
2. That there is no other explanation.

The theory itself I shall set forth somewhat at length and under these divisions into which it naturally falls.

1. In all abnormal states of the conscious

self, the soul thrusts itself forward with the purpose of asserting its selfhood; that is, of taking control of the life at the point where the conscious mind has surrendered, or shown itself incapable of, control. It is impossible to say whether the soul does this as the result of a blind impulse or whether it is the outcome of a good, though mistaken, intention to strengthen the weakness, or to supplement the deficiency, in the conscious self. The first of these views is the more probable.

2. Nature, which takes account only of the normal, does not intend that the soul shall, in the present state of existence, make any assertion of its selfhood; hence, when it does this, the results are always peculiar and often amazing.

While we may not feel an absolute confidence on the point, perhaps the view we should take of the human soul is to regard it as an entity which is in process of development, of gestation, and which is intended, at death, to replace the personality of which we are conscious; and, as in the case of all beings during the continuance of the gestative process, nature intends that the soul shall be quiescent; that it shall be acted upon, but shall not act; that it shall simply grow and prepare itself for exit upon a plane of life adapted to it. It follows that any assertion of selfhood by the soul, in the present life, is ab-

normal; and it is for this reason that its outplays, as observed, are blind, eccentric, lawless and even monstrous. If we can imagine an embryo seeking to control the organization which contains it, and in some measure succeeding, we shall have a parallel case; remembering that, in this instance, the embryo—the soul—is an entity whose intelligence and powers, in many ways, greatly transcend those of the containing organization. Our souls are, in almost every imaginable respect, vastly more tremendous than ourselves.

3. A discussion of the psychology of the soul, interpolated into this treatise on healing, would loom to such vast bulk as to overshadow everything else. I shall, therefore, not elaborate on the following observations beyond what is absolutely necessary in order to make them clear. It may be noted that some of these observations have no bearing on the question of physical healing and that I introduce them merely for the purpose of strengthening, in a general way, the theory I am setting forth.

(1) The soul is a complete intelligence; but one which is not adapted to activity in the present state of existence. This does not apply to that perfectly normal relationship of the soul with the processes of thought and with the involuntary physical functions.

(2) While the conscious self is not aware of

the soul, the soul is aware of the conscious self and of everything it thinks, feels and wills.

(3) At any given moment, the soul is aware both of the present and of all preceding contents of the conscious self. In other words, the soul remembers, with absolute and flawless accuracy, everything which has ever been presented to it.

I have said that I would not elaborate on the observations made in this chapter; but, that I may not be accused of making unjustified assertions, I feel the necessity of adducing, at least occasionally, examples in support of my statements.

Every student of psychology is familiar—for it is set forth in practically all the books—with the case of the illiterate and normally stupid German servant girl, who, in the delirium of fever, repeated long passages in an unknown tongue. It was finally determined that the language in which she spoke was the Hebrew. Further investigation showed that, some years previous to her illness, she had been, for a time, a domestic in the family of a clergyman, who was a Hebrew scholar and who was accustomed, in his study, to read aloud from the Hebrew Bible and the Targums. This reading had been overheard by the servant girl as she went about her household duties. It fell upon her ear simply as a series of absolutely unintelligible sounds, to which she attached no meaning and to which,

probably, she paid no conscious attention; yet afterwards, in delirium, she repeated these sounds with perfect accuracy.

I wish now to point out that no psychology which rejects or disregards a subliminal mind (soul) can or does explain the phenomena presented in this case; in other words, it cannot tell how the girl did the thing she did. The theory that the unintelligible sounds overheard by the girl really became an unrecognized part of her consciousness—that they were stored up in brain cells, and that the excitation of these cells by the fever lifted the long series of sounds from the plane of an unrecognized to that of a recognized consciousness—is absolutely unthinkable. This theory could be sustained only on the basis of an assertion that the memory of the conscious mind, on the last analysis, is perfect; and this proposition is neither one which can be proved nor one which is demanded by the necessities of the case. A fair estimate of the conscious mind shows that it is just as elaborately equipped to forget that which is valueless as it is to retain that which is valuable; and the theory that, while it appears to forget, it actually remembers ascribes to it an enormous power of retention which would seem to be conferred upon it for no other purpose than that of enabling it to do a useless thing. There is a perfect memory in the human constitution, but it is not that of the conscious mind. This

mind does not need it; but we can readily understand that the soul, in process of becoming the self, may need a flawless recollection of every impression made upon it. Such a recollection may, indeed, be a very commonplace matter in the case of an entity of such powers as the soul possesses.

There is, then, a simple and satisfactory explanation of the phenomena presented in the case of the servant girl to whom I have referred. It is that in the inhibition (blotting out) of the conscious mind, produced by illness, the soul asserted itself, assumed control and gave an aimless exhibition of its perfect memory; for it should be kept in mind that, in the present life, all manifestations of the soul are irregular and, therefore, aimless.

(4) One of the distinctive differences between the conscious mind and the soul is that the latter is intuitively aware, as the former is not, of the principles or laws which govern the relationships of quantities, facts or things. The supreme triumph of the conscious mind is the discovery, by a process of inductive reasoning, of the principles which lie behind phenomena. The soul, if I may so put it, begins to reason at the point where the conscious mind leaves off. It has an intuitive knowledge of all those laws after which the conscious mind laboriously gropes; its intellectual exercise consists not in the discovery, but in the

application, of principles; and it makes this application with incredible rapidity and certainty.

As an illustration of this, let me refer again to the peculiar and marvellous ability possessed by the so-called mathematical prodigy. When I spoke of such a prodigy as solving an elaborate problem in compound interest in ten seconds I was not at all overstating the ability possessed by certain persons. A large number of cases are on record of people, in no other way remarkable, who, mentally, and with amazing rapidity, could solve the most intricate mathematical problems. Such a prodigy will, in four or five seconds, announce a result which an ordinarily good mathematician will be an hour in working out on a blackboard.

Now, a reference to such cases shows that, in every instance, the prodigy has no explanation of his own peculiar ability. He does not know how he does the thing he does. He says that the problem "works itself," or that the answer "just comes to him," or that he sees the answer "written out in white letters on a dark background," or something of the kind. In a recently reported case, a girl, who could, in four or five seconds, mentally extract the cube root of a long row of figures suddenly presented to her, knew nothing of the process beyond the fact that visualized (mentally seen) figures, each of a different colour, grouped themselves into the required

answer. Nor, as I have pointed out in another place, has a psychology which deals only with the conscious mind any real explanation of the mental processes involved in the almost instantaneous solution of an involved mathematical problem. And I believe that no explanation can be given except by saying that the mathematical prodigy—as is nearly always observably the case—is abnormal; that the self-assertive soul is to the front; that this soul has an intuitive knowledge of the principle which governs the relationships of numbers; and that it is thus able, with a celerity which the conscious mind cannot even comprehend, to arrange and rearrange numbers in their true mathematical relationships. This also is a more or less aimless manifestation of the soul. It would be entirely so were it not for the fact that, in such cases, the conscious mind is not completely inhibited.

As I have said, I am not proposing to discuss the psychology of the soul. I am merely trying to say enough—and just enough—to show that there are a variety of mental processes which the psychology that declines to take the soul into consideration does not explain; and I am further trying to show that these processes may readily be explained if we suppose (1) that man possesses a soul which is, in itself, a complete and superior intelligence, and (2) that this soul, in abnormal states of the conscious self, asserts itself and, in a

somewhat irregular and lawless way, manifests its superior intelligence. This seems to be the explanation; it adequately covers all the observed facts; and there is no other explanation which does this.

It will be understood that my purpose in this chapter has been merely to show that the soul is very much more than an existence about which only some vague affirmations can be made; that, on the contrary, it is a part of the human constitution which can be brought under scientific observation; and that, as the result of such observation, we are aware that the soul is an entity which possesses powers incalculably greater than those of which we are conscious.

V

THE SOUL AS A HEALING AGENT

WHILE we are acquainted with a considerable number of the intelligent processes which go on within the human soul and with some of the powers it is capable of exerting, we can name but one of the laws which govern it. This law is that of suggestion. The soul has a tendency to do whatever it is told to do.

We know entirely too little about the spiritual side of man to be able to say why this is so. It is possible—though this is purely conjectural—that the soul is made amenable to the law of suggestion for some reason arising out of its present condition; and we may imagine that when it passes into another and independent state of existence this law will cease to be operative. But however this may be, we know from observation that when, in any abnormal state of the conscious self, the soul asserts itself and assumes control it characteristically and invariably tries to carry out whatever suggestion is made to it. To put it in another way, a person whose actions are directed not by his conscious mind, but by his soul, will try to do

whatever he is told to do; and, because the intensity and continuity of this effort vary in a definite ratio with the native force of the suggestion and with the number of times it is repeated, we can formulate, as we shall presently see, a law of suggestion; and because this law applies to the soul when it is in evidence, we may assume that it also applies when it is not in evidence.

Soul activity, as was brought out in the previous chapter, can be observed only when the mind of which we are conscious is more or less inhibited; that is, when it ceases to function; when it is, to all intents and purposes, partially or completely blotted out. This condition may be brought about in a great variety of ways; and it may exist in any one of almost numberless degrees. A few persons possess the singular ability of being able to inhibit the conscious mind at will. In others, a similar condition may be artificially induced. Usually, however, this inhibition, when it exists, is the result of illness or accident affecting the brain.

A fairly representative inhibition of the conscious mind is found in the hypnotized subject. In the earlier hypnotic stages, this inhibition is very partial; while in some of the later stages it is almost complete, the subject's memory, judgment, imagination and volition being practically blotted out. This is a condition of artificially

induced abnormality, in which the soul asserts itself and assumes control; and those who are familiar with the phenomena of hypnotism are aware that the subject is amenable to suggestion; that he will do what the hypnotist tells him to do and will continue doing it until the hypnotist tells him to stop. One of the most complete inhibitions of the conscious mind which can be imagined is found in the subject of constitutional neurotic tendencies, who has repeatedly been placed in the hypnotic state. In the life of such a subject the force of suggestion is enormously potent.

A more familiar, though less complete, inhibition of the conscious mind is found in cases of hysteria; and, as every physician is aware, the hysterical patient will accept and act on the most impossible suggestions. Such a patient will read of a case of poisoning, will immediately believe himself to be poisoned and will even exhibit the appropriate symptoms. The next day, perhaps, the suggestion will be that of heart disease, and the patient will experience palpitation and shortness of breath. These are merely instances of suggestion accepted and acted on by the soul; the activity being directed along the line of its relationship with the involuntary organs of the body.

Some of the most marked instances of amenability to suggestion are, of course, to be

found in cases of insanity. The suggestion here takes the form of a fixed idea; and the unfortunate patient will, for years or for an entire lifetime, occupy himself in the attempt to carry it out; the intensity of this effort sometimes expressing itself in what is known as homicidal mania. I am not to be understood as saying that all insane people exhibit the characteristic of the fixed idea, which is interpreted as a suggestion. Inhibitions of the conscious mind in insanity do not take the same form or exist in the same degree in all cases. It is, however, true that practically all insane people are amenable to suggestion, provided the right suggestion be offered; that is, provided the suggestion is one which is not rejected by some department of the conscious mind which is not inhibited.

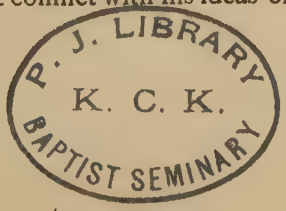
A very curious study is afforded by those cases in which the mind is tending towards the acceptance of a fixed idea, but has not completely fallen under its domination; one of the peculiarities of such cases being the readiness with which the idea in process of becoming fixed may be temporarily supplanted by even a trivial and obviously fictitious suggestion. Thus, in a newspaper which happens to be on my desk, I find an account of how a man entered the office of a bank cashier and, in a rambling way, demanded the payment of five thousand dollars, which he said capitalists, collectively, owed him;

threatening, in event of refusal, to drop a bottle containing a high explosive. The cashier, observing that the man had the appearance of being hungry, asked him to postpone the consideration of business matters for an hour, and, in the meantime, to go to lunch with him. The invitation was accepted; and the man was captured in a neighbouring restaurant. I should, perhaps, have looked far for a better illustration of amenability to an obviously fictitious suggestion.

The broad statement, covering all cases, is that the one observable tendency on the part of a person in whom the soul has supplanted the conscious mind and has become the directing agent in the life is to act on any suggestion made to him.

We must, however, take into consideration the fact that, as every impression made on the senses and every idea which passes through the conscious mind is interpreted by the soul as a suggestion, it is seldom that a suggestion lodged in the soul is not immediately modified by another suggestion; that is, by a contradictory or opposing idea which, being transformed by the soul into an impulse, to an extent counteracts the original impulse.

Thus, an imperfectly hypnotized subject—one in whom the conscious mind is not completely inhibited—will accept and act on any suggestion which does not conflict with his ideas of propriety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or of morality. When he is told to do something which, in his normal state, he regards as improper or immoral, he will refuse; this refusal arising out of the fact that the suggestion made by the hypnotist is opposed by a counter suggestion originating in the subject's conscious mind.

When we consider the vast number of impressions and ideas which are constantly being presented to the conscious mind, and when we remember that each of these is interpreted by the soul as a suggestion, we can readily understand that it is but rarely that any suggestion lodged in the soul remains unmodified for an appreciable time; a very wise provision, since an unmodified impulse to action along a given line might easily do incalculable damage. Strange as it may seem, the soul does not discriminate between the true and the false, the beneficent and the hurtful. All such determinations it leaves to the conscious mind; and if this mind is in error, the soul is also in error. This fact furnishes one of the strongest arguments supporting the theory that the soul is in a gestative condition. We cannot but suppose that when it becomes an independent entity it will acquire the discriminative ability which it now lacks, but which, in its present state of association with the conscious mind, it does not need.

It must, of course, be understood that the law of suggestion—that is, the expression of the in-

tensity of the effort on the part of the soul to carry out a suggestion made to it—cannot be stated as a mathematical formula. Such a term as "the square of the distance" would be meaningless on the spiritual plane. The law can, however, be stated. Observation has conclusively shown that the intensity of the effort made by the soul to carry out a suggestion lodged in it depends on three things.

These three things are:

1. The force with which the suggestion is made.

2. The number of times the suggestion is repeated.

3. The extent in which the suggestion is modified by counter suggestions.

I am aware that to many, perhaps most, people it will seem far-fetched, even absurd, to assert that such an entity as the human soul is so amenable to such an apparently trivial thing as a suggestion as, under certain conditions, to be completely swayed by it. The objection may be summed up by saying that it does not seem to be possible; but this, we must observe, does not constitute a valid argument. Of all forms of theory, that which is based on a preconception of what is possible is most flimsy and least worthy of attention.

If suggestion seems to us a weak force, it is merely because it is so on the planes of life with which we are familiar. On the physical plane,

it is not operative; and on the mental plane, though operative, it is by no means dominant. This may be admitted; and it may still be true that on the spiritual plane suggestion may be a force of enormous potency.

Suppose that instead of seeing the two lower, the physical and the mental, planes of existence, we saw only the two higher, the mental and the spiritual. We would then be ready to deny the existence of such a force as gravitation; and this denial would be based solely on the fact that gravitation was not operative on the planes with which we were familiar. Or, if we were confidently assured that such a force as gravitation existed, we would say that, since it did not affect either our mental or our spiritual states, its potency must be small. Now this would be precisely the same sort of error we actually make if we take for granted that suggestion is a force of small potency on the spiritual plane because it is so on the physical and mental planes. We should remember that all law is not the same law; that there is one law of the physical, and another law of the mental, and another law of the spiritual; and the only possible way in which we can estimate the intensity of a force on any particular plane of existence is by observing its operation on that plane. Its potency or lack of potency on some other plane has no bearing whatever on the case. The assertion that the

soul is amenable to the force of suggestion rests solely, and quite sufficiently, on the fact that, whenever it comes into the field of observation, it is found to be so amenable.

Thus far, though I have assumed that the soul may receive suggestions other than those presented to it through the senses and the conscious mind, I have not discussed this possibility from the scientific side. It is, however, a well established scientific fact that ideas may pass from one person to another entirely outside the usual channels of communication by speech, writing, gesture, etc.; and this may happen when the persons are separated by indeterminate distances. This process is known as thought transference or telepathy; and the investigations conducted especially by the English Society for Psychical Research have placed the actuality of it beyond doubt. As may be seen in its published reports, this society has collected and verified almost numberless instances of spontaneous telepathy, and has also, by various and repeated experiments, established the fact that one person can, by merely purposing to do so, transfer impressions to another person.

We may observe that thought transference is one phase of a great truth which is generally, though vaguely, accepted by Christian people. Religious truth, indeed, ultimately rests on the hypothesis that ideas pass and repass between

God and the human soul. Believers in a future life will also admit that discarnate spirits communicate with one another in some way; but it is generally assumed that the method of this communication is beyond conjecture and that speculation would be useless. It is true that, beyond the fact of its occurrence, the whole subject of thought transference is involved in profound mystery; but speculation is, perhaps, not so entirely profitless as has been assumed, and the human mind seems to be slowly groping a way towards the explanation of this puzzling phenomenon. Several interesting theories have already been advanced; but a review of them would not be quite pertinent to this discussion.

The attitude of the psychologists towards the question of thought transference is, of course, a conservative one; but it is significant that, with great unanimity, they now regard it as a subject which, while somewhat out of their field, is quite worthy of investigation. I know of but one American psychologist who flatly denies the possibility of thought transference; and his denial is based entirely on a very small number of experiments which were failures. Spontaneous telepathy—that is, the transference of thought between persons who are not experimenting—which is by far the most conclusive demonstration of its possibility, seems to have escaped his notice entirely; and he also takes no account of the many

successful experiments conducted by other, and at least equally competent, investigators.

It must also be said that the opinion of the psychologists on the point of the actuality of thought transference is much less weighty than that of those who are working directly in the field of psychical research and who, in a variety of ways, are undertaking the scientific investigation of man's spiritual side. And here the unanimity of opinion is very complete in affirming the actuality of thought transference and in regarding it as the only satisfactory explanation of certain phenomena which cover a very wide range. The only present difference of attitude among investigators in the field of psychical research touches not the actuality of thought transference, but merely the territory it may be regarded as covering. Some hold that it is a thing of rather infrequent occurrence. Others are inclined to the view that it is as much a matter of course for souls to establish telepathic communication with other souls as it is for men to speak or write to other men, and that those especially who are bound by ties of relationship or affection are constantly exchanging ideas on the spiritual plane; the reason we are not aware of this being that information thus received or imparted is usually not brought to the attention of the conscious mind. We need not, of course, adopt either the one or

the other of these views. The fact of thought transference is all that is essential in our discussion.

Now, if we admit that, at some undefined, but real, point of contact, an idea may pass directly from spirit to spirit, it is obvious that, in the soul which receives it, such an idea may become a suggestion of incalculable potency; this because, being unperceived by the conscious mind, it may happen not to be offset, and its effectiveness weakened, by counter suggestions. An unmodified suggestion is practically never presented to the soul through the channel of the conscious mind; weaker or stronger counter suggestions being always offered. But let us suppose an idea entering the soul through some other channel than the conscious mind. It is interpreted as a suggestion, and the soul proceeds to act on it. Under the circumstances, the intensity of this action may, in a very large degree, be unmodified by counter suggestion, and hence remarkable effects may be produced. I say "in a very large degree" because it is quite impossible to think of an idea, arriving in the soul from any direction, which will not, to a certain extent, be modified by counter suggestions already existing in the soul. Practically every person who has passed the years of childhood has entertained ideas which would act as counter suggestions to any single idea it would be possible to imagine. We should, however,

remember that these ideas, which would act as counter suggestions, have themselves been offset by other ideas which act as counter suggestions to them; and repetitions of this statement might be repeated indefinitely. This is simply equivalent to saying that the soul, like the conscious mind, unless influenced at the moment by some unusually powerful impression, is in a state of equilibrium. We may, then, reasonably suppose that an idea communicated telepathically to the soul, and the very existence of which is unperceived by the conscious mind, will find a more unobstructed right of way, when it is transformed into an impulse and acted on, than could possibly be true in the case of an idea received through the conscious mind, which shifts its point of view from moment to moment; which, indeed, preserves its integrity only by habitually looking at both sides of a thing. To put this in another way, in considering the power of a telepathically communicated suggestion, we may eliminate the important factor of consciously created and set-up counter suggestions; and we may, therefore, conclude that the most intense and continuous effort ever made by the soul is along the line of the suggestion which is telepathically received.

That we may have them clearly before us, I wish now to set in order the truths which have a

bearing on the possibility and on the manner of healing disease.

1. The soul is in direct and absolute control of all the vital organs of the body; the influence of the conscious mind on these organs being so slight that it may be disregarded. The conscious mind controls the muscular system; but practically the only control it has over the vital organs is in its ability to modify, temporarily and to a very limited extent, the movements of the diaphragm; this being due to the fact that the diaphragm is a part of the muscular system. Any influence the conscious mind may appear to have over the heart, liver, kidneys or stomach is not direct, but circuitous; in other words, is due to a suggestion lodged in the soul and on which the soul acts.

2. The soul is a substantial and intelligent entity, which acts in such a way as to suggest that it is undergoing a process of development or gestation; but which, in any case, is known to possess tremendous potentialities.

3. The soul, for some reason which we cannot clearly define, but which probably arises out of its peculiar association with the conscious mind and with the body, interprets every idea which reaches it as a suggestion and attempts to act on it.

4. The intensity and continuity of the effort the soul makes to act on a suggestion depends

on the native force (the authority and character) of the suggestion and on the way it is modified by counter suggestions.

5. We may suppose that the most potent suggestion that can be lodged in the soul is one which reaches it in some other way than through the conscious mind; this being the only kind of a suggestion which will not be modified or opposed by consciously created or accepted counter suggestions.

6. It has been scientifically determined that a suggestion may be communicated to the soul on the spiritual plane and by the process which, for want of a better descriptive term, we call thought transference.

7. A suggestion thus directly communicated to the soul may originate in another soul or it may originate in the divine intelligence. If God speaks to men, as our religion teaches that He does, it is quite certain that the thought passes directly from the infinite spirit to the finite spirit.

We may now attempt, on the basis of the foregoing observations, to construct a theory of how Jesus healed disease.

1. As Jesus repeatedly said that the healing of disease was not an easy thing, we may presume that, in working His cures, He used the most potent force which it was possible to employ; and this, as we have seen, would be a sug-

gestion of recovery communicated to the soul of the sick person, not through the conscious mind, but on the spiritual plane and directly.

2. At the time of projecting this purely spiritual suggestion of healing, directed to the soul of the patient, Jesus also uttered certain words or did certain things which were addressed to the conscious mind; His object being to prevent the conscious mind, at the critical moment, from setting up a counter suggestion which would modify the force of that which was lodged, and operative, in the soul.

No one, I think, will seriously contend that the spoken words of Jesus—the vocalized sounds—were the effective agents in healing paralysis or leprosy. The true and reasonable statement is not that the words contained or conveyed the power, but that, for some good reason, the words accompanied the exercise of the power and served to make it more completely and immediately effective. This they would do if the power was a suggestion of healing lodged in the soul; for the words, in that case, would serve to prevent the setting up of a counter suggestion—that of a continuance of the illness—by the conscious mind of the patient. We may observe that, aside from this, we cannot imagine any reason to account for the fact that Jesus, not invariably, but often, used words and gestures in working His miracles of healing.

It may also be said that the dignity of Jesus, the impressiveness of His bearing, His fame as a teacher and healer, the confidence of His manner, the accent of authority in His voice—all these would lend additional, and tremendous, effectiveness to the words or acts by which He sought to minimize or entirely to destroy the force of any counter suggestions which might be made by the conscious mind of the patient.

3. Turning our attention now from the worker of the miracle to the field in which it was worked, we may set forth the operation of the healing force in the constitution of the sick person thus:

(1) A suggestion of healing reached him, on the spiritual plane, and lodged directly in his soul.

(2) This suggestion was not modified by counter suggestions originating in the conscious mind.

(3) The soul of the patient, acting on this unmodified suggestion, put all its tremendous energy into the attempt to carry it out.

(4) The soul of the patient was in absolute control of all the vital organs of the body; and the effort put forth by the soul was directed to the precise end of restoring these organs to a healthy state.

(5) The invariable result was the immediate restoration of the sick person to perfect health; an

outcome which gives us some light upon the almost incalculable potency of the human soul when, no obstructions being placed in its way, it is allowed to act freely in a given direction.

This, however, as we shall see, is by no means the last word on the question of how Jesus cured disease.

VI

THE ORIGIN OF A HEALING SUGGESTION

IT is now necessary to take into consideration the most obscure factor in the miracles of Jesus; but one which, at the same time, has a most important bearing on the relation of Christianity to the healing of disease, and also on the claims advanced by all healing schools and cults. This factor is the statement of Jesus that it was not He (the man) who did the works; that of His own self (as a man) He could do nothing; and that it was the Father who dwelt in Him (God) who did the works. If we put this in terms of our theory, we may state it thus: In order to be effective in restoring a sick person to health, the suggestion of healing communicated to the soul must originate not in a human intelligence, backed by a human will, but in a divine intelligence, backed by a divine will.

As we have seen, one of the important factors determining the intensity with which the soul will act on a suggestion is what we may call the native or original force of the suggestion. Thus, a mere idea, though interpreted by the soul as an impulse, will be less effective than a direct command. The effectiveness of a command will vary in proportion to the recognized

authoritativeness and the actual potentiality of the source from which it proceeds.

Those who have had the opportunity of seeing a hypnotist at work have observed that his success in controlling his subjects depended, in a large degree, on his attitude of absolute confidence and on the authoritative way in which his suggestions were made. A hypnotized subject may be in a tolerably complete state of subjection to the operator; but if, even under these circumstances, the operator becomes, or assumes to become, uncertain of his power and begins to deliver his suggestions in a hesitating or unauthoritative way, the subject will, in a corresponding degree, set up a resistance and will hesitate, or even refuse, to obey.

Also, as is well known, a hypnotized subject will absolutely disregard a suggestion made by any other person than the operator; this for the reason that the subject does not recognize any other source of authority. The subject's view that only the hypnotist has authority over him completely nullifies the native force of suggestions made by other persons.

A more common illustration of the same truth is furnished by victims of hysteria; a disease in which the conscious mind is more or less inhibited, and in which, therefore, the irregular and erratic action of the soul is manifested. A hysterical patient will often ignore or reject the

most beneficent suggestions made by friends, simply because the source is not recognized as authoritative, but will accept and act on precisely the same suggestions if they are made by a physician in whom the patient has confidence.

The same thing is true in cases of insanity. Insane people are often absolutely intractable until the physician or attendant assumes a character which does not belong to him, but which the patient recognizes as authoritative. Thus, an insane man, who had been a soldier, refused to eat. After using every possible persuasion without effect, the attending physician, recalling the patient's military service, said, "But you don't realize who it is that is talking to you. I am General Grant"; when the man instantly came to attention and received instructions to take his rations with the greatest docility.

It would be easy, if it were necessary, to multiply illustrations of the fact that the native force (the authority and character) of a suggestion is an important factor in determining the intensity with which the soul will act on it and, consequently, the effect of such action on physical states, when the activity is directed to the changing of such states.

Now, the statement of Jesus, as we may understand it, was that a merely human intelligence, backed by a merely human will, cannot originate a suggestion of sufficient native force to heal dis-

eases as He healed them, or to heal such diseases as He dealt with successfully.

This, of course, does not mean that a suggestion originating on the merely human plane, and, either through the conscious mind or telepathically, lodged in the soul of a sick person, will be entirely ineffective in setting up a healing tendency or process. The soul acts upon any and every suggestion presented to it. It is only the intensity of the action which varies in proportion to the native force of the suggestion. As a matter of observation, we know that practically all healers, whether they stand merely for themselves or whether they represent some healing cult, do cure certain diseases; but it is equally true that these diseases are those of such a nature as we might expect would be amenable to a suggestion of very moderate native force. In other words, they are almost entirely disorders of the nervous system; of that part of the physical organism which is most immediately in contact with the soul, which is most completely under its influence and in which it can most easily transform conditions.

It is true that the healing cults repudiate the idea that the power they employ is that of suggestion; but it seems a sufficient reply to say that this is the one, and only, power they appear to use. The methods of these cults, however apparently dissimilar, are precisely alike in the fact that

they convey suggestions of healing to the soul of the patient. Dr. Alexander Dowie, the famous healer of Zion City, depended on an aggressive personality and an attitude of authority to give a suggestion of great native force; and he paid little attention to the removal of counter suggestions. The method of Christian Science varies in that, as a preliminary, it carefully eliminates counter suggestions, and then proceeds to give effectiveness to the healing suggestion by repeating it an indefinite number of times; this, it will be remembered, being one of the ways in which the force of a suggestion can be intensified. But, however the methods of the healing cults may vary, the essential thing done seems to be the presentation of a suggestion of recovery to the patient; and we may observe that the results are exactly such as we might expect if this were the thing, and the only thing, done. The actual cures are those of diseases which lie within the somewhat narrow limits of nervous disorders and of functional derangements which arise out of such disorders, and which disappear when the nervous system is restored to a healthy condition. This is equivalent to saying that not only does the method of all the healing cults seem to be that of suggestion but also that the observable results are precisely those we should expect to follow upon and flow from applications of this particular method.

The healing cults are also alike in their inability to cure the graver forms of nervous disease (as paralysis), organic and constitutional ailments and malformations; this being a quite sufficient refutation of the claim advanced, in one form or another, by practically all these cults that the power effecting the cure is that of the direct volition of God. If this were really the case, we could not possibly suppose that the cures would be limited to diseases of a certain class. The direct volition of God, if this were really the operative force, would be quite as effective in the healing of tumors, cancers, consumption, club feet, etc., as in the cure of hysteria or dyspepsia. But it is not observably the case that the healing cults cure all diseases with equal facility and certainty. The graver acute and organic diseases they do not cure at all; and we must, therefore, conclude that it is not the direct agency of God which is operative in their healings.

I am aware that there is in existence a great mass of voluntary and sincere personal testimony which tends directly to refute my statement that none of the healing cults can cure organic or constitutional diseases. Because Christian Science happens to be, at present, the most prominent healing cult, and because the testimonies to cures effected by its methods have been carefully collected and are very voluminous, I shall take its testimonies as representative; observing,

at the same time, that they are scarcely more voluminous, and are certainly not more direct or convincing as evidences of cures, than those which poured in upon Doctor Dowie, and which he published, in the days of his ascendency.

It may be said of Christian Science that its method is really much more scientific than that of any other school of healing; though I regard this as merely happening to be the case, and as not arising in any way out of the theology or the philosophy of the system which goes by that name. The theology of Christian Science, indeed, as must be apparent to any one who gives it the least unprejudiced attention, is an absolute distortion of Scriptural truth, and its philosophy is so unthinkable as to be grotesque; but the Christian Science method of healing, which does not in the least depend upon the system, is more precisely adapted to the end in view than that of any other cult. The Christian Science healer—though, apparently, without the least idea of the real significance of what he or she is doing—very carefully eliminates the counter suggestions of continuing illness in the mind of the patient; this being effected by instructing the sick person, persistently and in contradiction of all symptoms or feelings, to deny the actuality of sickness. The suggestion of recovery is then presented to the patient; and it is arranged that this suggestion shall be repeated indefinitely,

each repetition adding effectiveness to the healing impulse. The patient is given daily treatments; these consisting in the silent and (though not so called) telepathic communication of the idea of recovery; this, we may observe, being something which may actually occur. The patient is also furnished with a copy of "Science and Health," and is told that the mere reading of the book will be effective in the removal of his or her ailment. Thus, the book itself—which soothingly conveys no ideas whatever to the average mind—does, merely by being taken in the hand, opened and read, repeat to the patient the suggestion of health.

Christian Science, in this way, effects a considerable number of cures; but only of nervous diseases or of functional ailments which arise out of nervous disturbance. My reasons for believing this to be the case, in spite of the large number of testimonies to the contrary, are as follows:

1. There is a strong presumption that any testimony to Christian Science healing is unreliable. The very first thing that a Christian Science healer impresses on the mind of a patient is that he must not, under any circumstances, admit that he is sick or that he feels pain; that he must not, in any way, recognize the existence of such things as sickness or pain. It makes no difference how ill he may appear to be, he must think and say that he is perfectly

well. He must believe this, and say it, everywhere and always, morning, noon and night; and, under these circumstances, it is perfectly possible to get any number of testimonies to healing, which will at once be perfectly sincere and absolutely unreliable. When people are taught that they must believe and say that a certain thing has happened, whether it actually has happened or whether it has not, their testimony on the point of whether it has or has not happened carries little weight. Tested simply by the legal rules which govern the admissibility of evidence, such testimonies must be regarded as on a par with that of a witness who, in court, should confess that he had been instructed what to say on the stand; but who, at the same time, should believe himself to be telling the truth; this belief being based not on what he had actually seen or heard, but on what some one had told him he should have seen and heard.

2. In a considerable number of alleged Christian Science cures, which I have personally investigated, I have not found a single case of organic or constitutional disease in which the facts corresponded with the testimonies given by the healer, the patient or the patient's Christian Science friends.

Thus, Mrs. B——, a Christian Science healer, assured me that a patient whom she was treating, and in whose case I was interested, had en-

tirely recovered his health. The disease was consumption. The patient died in about twenty hours after my conversation with the healer; and a physician who made an autopsy officially reported the death as due to consumption.

Mrs. J——, a neighbour, informed me that, under Christian Science treatment, she had perfectly recovered from an ailment of long standing. The disease was chronic intestinal inflammation. Mrs. J——, at the time of giving me this information, was studying to become a healer. About a year later, Mrs. J—— renounced Christian Science for the reason, as she said, that it had never done her any good, and returned to membership in a denomination to which she had formerly belonged.

Mrs. S—— told me that a member of her family, whose case had been pronounced incurable by a number of physicians, had been restored to perfect health by Christian Science treatment. There could be no doubt that Mrs. S—— sincerely believed what she said. She was, in fact, radiantly happy. The disease was epilepsy. Both on the day before and on the day after my conversation with Mrs. S——, the patient experienced a number of epileptical seizures, precisely similar to those which were characteristic of the case.

Mrs. H—— informed me that, under Christian Science treatment, a benignant tumor, in-

testinally adherent, had entirely disappeared. A few months later—under what influence I do not know—Mrs. H—— submitted to a surgical operation, and the physicians found and removed the tumor.

Mrs. K——, an elderly woman, who had been partially, though not totally, blind, was reported as having recovered her sight under Christian Science treatment. A friend of mine, who was acquainted with her, called. Mrs. K—— assured him that her vision was perfect; that she saw as well as she ever had in her life. He also said that when he took his leave, and Mrs. K—— arose to accompany him to the door, she was obliged to feel for the furniture with her hands in order to avoid coming in contact with it.

It would not, I think, be profitable to multiply instances in every way similar to these I have given. It will be quite sufficient to say that I have yet to find the first case of alleged Christian Science healing, involving an organic or constitutional disease, in which the actual facts do not contradict the testimony offered.

On the other hand, I have observed a considerable number of cases of purely nervous derangement which were benefited or cured by Christian Science treatment; and, in estimating the real value of testimonies, it should be kept in mind that nervous people, as a rule, mentally deny that they are simply nervous and regard them-

selves as afflicted with very grave and dangerous diseases. When the nervous system is restored to an approximately normal condition, these purely imaginary ailments disappear; and such patients will sincerely testify that they have been cured of heart disease, consumption or any other trouble with which they may have fancied themselves afflicted.

All the healing cults, of which Christian Science is fairly representative, do cure certain diseases; but they are precisely the diseases which we would expect to see cured by the lodgment of a moderately forcible suggestion in the soul of the patient. None of these cults is successful in treating diseases such as were brought to Jesus for healing and which He caused to disappear; and, therefore, the experiments made by these cults do not in any way affect the statement of Jesus to the effect that the healing of disease, in any real and satisfactory sense, is something which can be accomplished only by the power of God.

This is equivalent to saying that, as human beings, our ability to use the force of suggestion is limited, exactly as our ability to use any other force, as gravitation, is limited. We can and do employ the force of gravitation in a variety of small ways, thereby incalculably benefiting ourselves; but, after all, our dominance over this force is pitifully meagre. With

all its higher applications we are powerless to interfere. Our relationship with the force of suggestion is precisely similar. We can use it; but only in a very limited way; and this restriction of our abilities is a wise one. It should be remembered that any force which can be employed for the welfare of mankind can also, in an equal degree, be directed to its hurt by one who is in control of it and who is evilly disposed. Samson is not the only man who has adapted gravitation to the purpose of slaughtering enemies. The ability to use the force of suggestion in any large way, if possessed by one whose disposition tended in that direction, would work incalculable damage to humanity. It is not too much to say that a suggestion of sufficient native force immediately to heal a constitutional disease would, if the character of it were changed, instantly kill a man; and, as this would be accomplished by a power which absolutely eludes observation, it would be impossible to fix the responsibility for the death. When this view of it is taken, we must recognize the fact that the limitations placed upon the use of suggestion are very wise and beneficent.

But if the truth—for it is a truth—that such diseases as were brought to Jesus for healing can be mastered only by a suggestion which originates in the intelligence, and which is backed by the will, of God, there is still some-

thing to be said; this something arising out of diverse views of God and of His attitude towards disease.

In the view of Christian Science, for example, God appears to be an infinite quiescence, who is totally unaware that such errors as sickness, sin and death exist and are located within the circumference of His own existence. The Christian Science conception of God is, however, so vague, and the statements in which it is set forth are so self-contradictory, that it is impossible to fix on anything specific or satisfactory. As an illustration of this, I may refer to Mrs. Eddy's assertion that "man is a mere bundle of God's beliefs." Yet, as she further states, man is composed of mortal mind, and mortal mind is synonymous with delusion, error and falsity. If all these statements be accepted, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that certain of God's beliefs are in the nature of delusions, being erroneous and false; but Mrs. Eddy, for reasons which she does not clearly state, vehemently denies the validity of this conclusion. Or, as an example of the self-contradictory views of Christian Science, I may mention Mrs. Eddy's statement that man is not in God and God is not in man, coupled with her assertion, made in another place, that we must "put away the idea that God and man are separate intelligences." But if man is not in God, and God is not in

man, it is difficult to understand how they can be anything else than separate intelligences. To attempt to grasp the Christian Science idea of God is simply to wander in a labyrinth of such bewildering and conflicting statements.

Most of the healing cults, however, have not professedly departed from what is known as the orthodox and Scriptural view of God; and these, without denying the reality of sickness, sin and death, hold the view that God will, in answer to prayer or in response to an exercise of faith, heal disease by direct interference; and they explain the inability of the church to cure physical ailments by saying that its faith is weak and not commensurate to the effecting of such a result.

The difficulty with this view seems to be that it regards God as a force, rather than an intelligence; it assumes that He has placed in our hands an ability to which, whenever it is properly exercised, He will respond with a manifestation of energy; and it quite destroys our conception of God as a being who works when and where and how He pleases. If God will, invariably, in response even to genuine prayer or to intense faith, exercise a healing power, there is then a certain real sense in which He subordinates His own intelligence to that of man; and if God will not invariably do this, there is then no possibility of laying down a law of prayer healing or of faith healing. All we can say is that the healing may or may

not take place; the view of God in the matter, and not the prayer or the faith, being the determining factor in the case. If God, as is generally believed by Christian people, is a supreme intelligence, as well as an omnipotent power, it may very well happen that His view of the desirability of healing any particular case of sickness will differ from ours; and it is impossible to suppose that God has placed in human hands an ability which, exercised even in the most intense form imaginable, will cause, or compel, Him to change His view of what is best, or to act on anything else than that view.

I shall hereafter discuss what I believe to be the true relationship of faith with the healing of disease. At present, I wish merely to say that the contention of the healing cults that the church cannot deal with physical ailments because its faith is weak is not well founded. The weakness or strength of faith is not the only factor to be considered. If it is God who heals, and if God is an intelligence, then His view of any particular case is the supreme determining factor. As popular philosophy is always likely to be right, so popular theology is also always likely to be right; and it is, and always has been, its attitude that God will considerately regard both prayer and faith, but that, in any given case, His will must be held as superior to any possible earnestness of prayer or intensity of

faith; and, really, it is impossible to imagine how one who thinks of God as an intelligent being can take any other view. But if this view be accepted, then, as I have said, no law of prayer cure or of faith cure can be formulated; and the contention of the healing cults that the church cannot deal with disease because its faith is weak has no good basis. If its view of God as a supreme intelligence is correct, the faith of the church might be intensified a hundred or a thousand or ten thousand times, and it might still be unable to heal disease. It is only God whose ability is commensurate to the production of this particular effect; and in this, as in all other matters, God works when and where and how He pleases. I am not contending that the general view of the church on the question of healing disease is absolutely right; for I do not think that it is. I am, at present, merely pointing out that the healing cults are not justified in laying it down as a law that the ability to cure disease is in direct proportion to the intensity of faith. If it were faith, considered purely by itself and as a physically regenerative force, which heals, this would be the law; but I do not know of any school or cult which asserts that this is the case. Uniformly, the recovery is referred to a divine energy which responds to an exercise of faith; and it is, therefore, necessary that another factor, the intelligence of God, shall be taken into account.

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VII

THE FACTOR OF FAITH

IN this chapter, I shall speak of faith only as it is somehow related to the healing of physical disease; and it should be understood that I nowhere use the word in any general or theological sense.

Most Christian people are accustomed to lay a very great emphasis on faith as a factor which, somewhere, entered into Christ's miracles of healing. Thus, we often hear it said that Jesus was accustomed, as preliminary to the performance of a cure, to demand that the sick person should have faith; and, based on this view, there is a wide-spread notion that faith was an indispensable element in the miracle. I shall attempt to discover just how true, or how mistaken, this idea may be.

There are four, and but four, ways in which faith can be considered as having a bearing in Christ's miracles of healing.

1. Faith may be regarded as the force which, per se, brought about the cure.

This is a view which it would be extremely difficult to support; as it would be necessary to

show (1) that there is such a force and (2) that it is adapted to the precise end of healing physical disease. In a previous chapter, I did, indeed, speak of faith as a force; but, as the reader doubtless understood, I there merely assumed its existence in order to use it in illustrating a distinction between natural and supernatural energies; and I did not, in any sense, attempt to prove its actuality. It will be observed that the remark of Jesus to His disciples, touching the power of faith possessed even in small measure (as a grain of mustard seed), harmonizes quite as well with the view which immediately follows this as it does with an interpretation of faith as essentially and in itself a force.

2. Faith may be regarded as an agency which, if I may so express it, unloosed, or set in motion, a force; the energy thus freed being that which effected the healing.

This is the view commonly taken; and frequent attempts have been made to formulate a law of faith healing based on the theory that, whenever faith reaches a certain point of intensity, God responds to it by an exercise of divine power, directed to the end which the person exercising the faith has in contemplation. Now it may be admitted that God does often respond to faith; that He is even much readier to make such a response than we ordinarily suppose; but, as I have pointed out elsewhere, it is difficult to

think of an intelligent God who has committed Himself to doing this invariably; and, unless the divine response to faith, carried to a certain point of intensity, is invariable, there can be no such thing as a law of faith healing; as, in this case, the divine view, and not the faith, is the real determining factor.

3. Faith may be regarded as a useful, but not indispensable, adjunct to the force which effected the cure. In other words, it may be thought of as assisting the healing force, either (1) by adding to its actual intensity or (2) by giving it a more unrestricted right of way. This, as I shall attempt to show, was the importance which Jesus mentally assigned to faith in working His miracles of healing.

4. Faith may be regarded as an attitude of mind which Jesus approved, and which, when He found it, He rewarded by working the cure to which His attention was directed; the faith, per se, having no bearing on the healing. In all those cases in which faith was exercised not by the sick person, but only by some friend or relative, we must either accept this view or we must hold, which is perfectly possible, that the friend's faith was communicated telepathically to the sick person, and thus became an adjunct to the force which effected the cure.

We may now try to determine the extent in which faith entered into the healing miracles of

Jesus and the importance He seemed to place on it as a factor in the effecting of His cures.

1. In sixteen of the healing miracles, the narratives do not mention faith or belief, either as existent or non-existent.

2. In ten of the healing miracles, the narratives mention faith or belief; but in such a variety of ways that a tabulation of these instances is necessary in order to show the exact importance assigned it.

The cases in which faith appears as a factor in the miracle are as follows:

(1) The healing of two blind men, at Capernaum. As a preliminary to working this miracle, Jesus asked, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" The blind men replied, "Yea, Lord."

(2) The healing of a leper, at Gennesaret. The leper came with a voluntary profession of faith. He said to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

(3) The healing of a woman with an issue of blood, at Gennesaret. In this case, Jesus said to the woman, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." The phrase "hath made thee whole" seems to imply that Jesus made this reference to faith only after the cure had been effected and when He was in the act of dismissing the patient.

(4) The healing of Blind Bartimæus, at

Jericho. Jesus said to the man, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Here, even more obviously than in the preceding instance, Jesus referred to faith only after the cure had been effected and when He was dismissing the patient.

(5) The healing of the man sick of the palsy, at Capernaum. The narrative reads, "And Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." In this instance, faith seems to have been exercised both by the patient and by his friends.

(6) The healing of the Syrophœnician woman's daughter, at Tyre. Jesus said, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." The faith was exercised by the mother of the patient.

(7) The healing of the centurion's servant, at Capernaum. Jesus, in this instance, merely remarked to these about Him, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." The faith was exercised by a friend of the sick man.

(8) The raising of Jairus' daughter. Jesus said to Jairus, "Be not afraid, only believe." We are not told whether, or to what extent, Jairus accepted this advice. Assuming that he did accept it, the faith was exercised by the father of the patient. The remark which Jesus made on this occasion seems, on its face, to have been intended merely to reassure Jairus.

(9) The healing of the demoniac child, at Mt. Tabor. In this instance, the father of the child began by expressing a doubt of the ability of Jesus to heal the child. He said, "If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." Jesus said to him, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The man replied, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." The faith was exercised by the father of the patient.

(10) The healing of the nobleman's son, at Cana. In this case, Jesus began by pointing out and reproving a lack of faith in the petitioner. He said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The nobleman's faith apparently intensified as the conversation proceeded; but, on the face of the narrative, he did not arrive at an attitude of unqualified belief until after Jesus had assured him that his son would live, when he went away satisfied. The faith was exercised by the father of the patient.

If, now, we examine these ten instances of healing, in which the narrative somehow introduces faith, we discover:

1. That there were but five cases in which faith appears as existing in the mind of the sick person.

2. That in two, of these five, cases (those of the leper and of the man sick of the palsy), Jesus did not mention faith, but merely observed its existence.

3. That in two other, of these five, cases (those of the woman with an issue of blood and of Blind Bartimæus), Jesus did not mention faith until after the cure had been performed.

4. That in one case (that of the two blind men, at Capernaum) Jesus, as a preliminary to working the miracle, inquired whether the patients believed in His ability to heal them. In all the healing miracles of Jesus, this is the only instance in which He even appeared to demand faith on the part of the sick person as prerequisite to the cure; and, certainly, this seems a rather slender basis on which to found the broad assertion, so often heard, that Jesus was accustomed to demand faith on the part of those who came to Him for healing.

5. That there were five cases of healing in which the faith was exercised not by the sick person, but by some relative or friend. In these instances, as I have pointed out, we must regard the faith simply as an attitude of mind which Jesus approved, and which He rewarded by granting the request of the petitioner, or we must assume that the friend who exercised the faith was in telepathic communication with the sick person and thus imparted to him something of his own attitude of confidence. In this connection, I may say that some of the ablest investigators of man's spiritual side assert that there is an uninterrupted, telepathic communication

between those who, consciously, are bound by ties of affection. Aside from these two theories, we can imagine no possible bearing which faith, existing in a mind (or soul) apart from that of the sick person, could have on the recovery.

It is sometimes said that the mere fact that people came to Jesus for healing showed that they had faith in His ability to cause the disappearance of their ailments. We may, however, doubt the validity of this conclusion. We are aware that, at present, large numbers of sick people go to Christian Science healers, faith healers, mental healers, not because they have any particular faith in the person to whom they apply, or in his methods, but simply as a kind of last resort; and it is perfectly possible to suppose that this was the attitude of at least some of those who came to Jesus. In this connection, too, I may point out that thè patient did not always come to Jesus or make an application for healing. The Master, sometimes, of His own initiative, went to the patient. Such instances were the healing of the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5); the woman with an infirmity (Luke 13); the man with dropsy (Luke 14); the man born blind (John 9).

Also, as showing that Jesus did not seem to regard faith as an indispensable element in a miracle of healing, we may notice certain peculiarities existing in particular cases. Thus, the

narrative plainly implies that the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda was not even aware of the identity of Jesus. When the Master said to him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" it did not occur to the man that he was being addressed by a miracle worker, who had power to cure him; but his thoughts immediately turned to the matter of being put into the pool, as the only means of restoration which occurred to him. We cannot, I think, hold that there was an exercise of faith in this case; especially as a remark made by the patient, immediately before he was restored, shows that his mental attitude was then one of extreme dejection, bordering on despair. In two cases—those of the demoniac at Gadara and the demoniac in the synagogue—the narratives represent the patients as taking attitudes of distinct antagonism to Jesus; and there was nothing in these cases which even remotely resembled faith. On the contrary, in each instance, the men, influenced by the possessing demons, entreated Jesus to let them alone. This He refused to do; but healed them in spite of themselves. Another instance in which we can interpret the attitude of the patient only as antagonistic to Jesus is found in the case of Malchus. This man, at the time his wound was healed, was engaged in the work of making Christ a prisoner; and, in view of this activity, it is difficult to suppose that Malchus had any faith in Christ.

It is sometimes stated, by those who fancy they discern a vital relationship between faith and healing, that Jesus did not, or could not, work these miraculous cures in places where the people did not believe on Him; and His native town of Nazareth is pointed out as an example. A more careful reading of the text is all that is necessary to show that, at Nazareth, Jesus did work some miracles of healing; and that, having done this, He voluntarily refrained from a further exercise of His power. Matthew, speaking of Christ's visit to Nazareth, says, "And He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." Mark, referring to the same visit, says, "And He could do there no mighty work, save that He laid His hands on a few sick folk, and healed them." It is plain that, whatever the adverse force set up by the incredulity of the people of Nazareth was, the Master, when He wished to do so, was able to overcome it.

The above considerations seem to show conclusively that the enormous importance which Christian thought has attached to faith as an element in the healing of disease is not justified by anything in the attitude or in the teachings of Jesus. He did not in any instance demand faith on the part of the sick person as a prerequisite to the cure. In the one case in which He even appeared to do this, He merely asked the blind

men whether they believed in His ability to heal them; and there is no intimation that, had they been wanting in faith, Jesus would have found it impossible to restore their sight, or would have declined to do so. In nearly two-thirds of His healing miracles, Jesus did not, even remotely, refer to faith; and, in those cases in which He did mention it, He spoke of it rather in a commendatory way, as something He was glad to find existing, than as a thing which had any direct bearing on the miracle. In a word, Jesus did not appear to regard faith as an essential, or even an invariable, preliminary to the working of a cure.

There is, however, another side to the case. The gospels undoubtedly show that Jesus not only approved faith where He found it, but also that, when it existed in the mind of the patient, the Master seemed to regard the cure as easier of accomplishment. In those instances in which the sick person's faith was weak, or in which he had no faith at all, Jesus intensified His method, making it more direct and forcible. Thus, in healing cases of demoniacal possession, where there was an absence of faith, the Master always used the method of direct command, which He seldom did in other cases. And this, I think, indicates the importance which Jesus, mentally, put on faith in its relation to the healing of disease. He regarded it as a state of mind which

made the operation of the real healing force more certainly and immediately effective; and we can understand this if we remember that faith is a mental attitude which eliminates, or at least minimizes, those counter suggestions of continuing illness which, in its absence, would be set up by the conscious mind of the patient. The healing force which Jesus exerted was so tremendous that, at least in a number of instances, it effected the cure in spite of an absence of faith, and of the consequent presence of these adverse counter suggestions. But even the Master—and we can understand why if we take this view of it—found it easier to cause the disappearance of disease if the patient had faith; and in the case of a healer able to originate, or to convey, a curative force of less intensity than that which Jesus employed, faith on the part of the sick person would become proportionately more important.

VIII

RAISING THE DEAD

THERE is a miracle which Jesus repeatedly performed—that of restoring life to the dead—to which I think it worth while to give special consideration ; this because it seems to differ widely from the other miracles of healing.

The gospel narratives suggest that the three detailed cases of raising the dead (those of Lazarus, of the young man at Nain and of the daughter of Jairus) were by no means the only ones. Thus, when John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus, to ask Him a question touching His Messiahship, the Master told these men to observe the miracles He was then performing, and He mentioned the raising up of the dead as one of them.

The miracle of restoring life to the dead must, of course, remain invested with a certain obscurity.

This is true:

1. Because we cannot determine the exact relationship, or nexus, between the body and the soul.

2. Because we do not know the exact place, or distance, to which the soul retires after death.

3. Because we cannot say what laws, at present governing it, the soul discards, or to what new spiritual laws it becomes subject, after its separation from the body.

I see no reason, however, for supposing that, in raising the dead, Jesus used any other method than that He employed in His other miracles of healing. There is, at least, no ground on which to base any other theory.

As bearing on this particular miracle, then, I wish to make the following observations:

1. As I have pointed out in another place, Jesus, so far as we can determine, invariably insisted on placing Himself in close proximity to the body of the person whom He proposed to recall to life; on one occasion making a long journey in order to effect this end. This, which we must, I think, regard as having some significance, opens the way to a number of curious speculations. It has been held that the soul, after leaving the body, remains for a time in the immediate vicinity; and, if we should accept this view, we might conclude that what Jesus really sought was not so much proximity to the body as to the soul, that He might deal with it more effectively. It may, indeed, be true—as large numbers of Christians hold—that the spiritual world is not separated from the material one

by any geographical distance or space interval which need be taken into account; our failure to apprehend its really near-by existence being due entirely to a lack of that peculiar faculty which would enable us to do this. It is not essential, however, that we shall pass an opinion upon the truthfulness or reasonableness of this, or any other purely speculative, opinion. It is only necessary that we shall take the broad view that the spiritual world is a realm of intelligence, and that a soul located (if I may use that word) anywhere in it was amenable to the power of Christ, whom we must regard as the master of this entire department of conscious life. But if this view be accepted, then, obviously, it was not essential that Jesus should place Himself in the immediate vicinity of the body to be raised in order to convey the idea or command of return to the soul. He might have done this, just as effectively, at any geographical distance; and, therefore, I prefer to think that the Master placed Himself close to the dead body because this position enabled Him—and was the only one which would enable Him—to minimize, or destroy, any adverse counter suggestions which might originate in the conscious mind of the person immediately after the moment of reanimation. We may easily imagine that the suddenly restored conscious mind of a person experiencing such a marvellous and unheard-of

transition as that from death to life might be thrown into such a state of uncertainty and bewilderment as, at first, utterly to disbelieve, or to deny, the actuality of his own restoration; and it was this dangerous counter suggestion which Jesus desired to minimize.

2. The miracles of raising the dead, as it seems to me, go very far to confirm the view I have advanced that the real and effective healing force which Jesus employed lay not in the words He spoke, but in a suggestion, or command, which was conveyed to the sick person on the spiritual plane and which lodged in his soul.

In this connection, we may observe two things:

(1) We cannot even imagine spoken words, as such, reaching, impressing themselves upon or being understood by a disembodied spirit. This would be to suppose that such a spirit is endowed with a physical ear, which is sensitive to atmospheric vibrations; and we cannot believe that this is the case.

(2) As I have previously noted, the narratives in which the miracles of raising the dead are set forth leave on our minds the impression that Jesus did not address the person in spoken words until after the moment of reanimation. This is shown in the character of the words themselves; which were such as, naturally, would have been addressed only to a living person. In

each case of raising the dead, the words which Jesus used had no bearing whatever on the point of return from the dead. He said nothing about death or life or the transition between these two states. His words, though no doubt forcibly uttered and supremely authoritative, merely directed a living person to do what a living person easily might do; but the doing of which would tend to assure him that he was alive; that the transition from death to life was an accomplished fact.

3. The question of whether the souls of those whom Jesus restored to life were, during the interval of disembodiment, still amenable to the law of suggestion is one which it is equally impossible and unnecessary to answer. In the matter of recalling the soul to the body—that is, of causing it to change its location in space—Jesus may have used suggestion or some other force. This also applies to the matter of causing the soul to resume its association with the body. The precise ways in which these things were effected, even if we could discover and comprehend them, would have no bearing in this discussion. We must, however, suppose that, at the moment of reanimation, the person recalled to life became precisely such a person as he was before death, the previous relationship between the soul and the body being exactly and completely restored; and this is equivalent

to saying that, whatever may have been its disembodied condition, the soul, at the instant of reëstablishing relationship with the body, became amenable to the force of suggestion; and it was for this reason that Jesus so carefully guarded against the possibility that adverse and harmful suggestions might be presented to it.

4. I shall not attempt the impossible task of defining the way in which a discarnate soul may reoccupy and reanimate the body from which it has once departed. We know something of the body and something of the soul; but the nexus between the two absolutely eludes us. There are, of course, various theories; one of the most interesting being that the body is charged with "physical magnetism" and the soul with "spiritual magnetism," and that between these two magnetisms there is a strong affinity. I mention this view because, though purely speculative, it has the merit of explaining some things which are otherwise obscure.

IX

THE LAW OF HEALING

SINCE the Apostolic Age, the Christian church—occupied in making theological formulas; and rigidly excluding from these anything which did not lend itself to definition—has never emphasized what, to one reading the New Testament for the first time, would appear to be one of its leading features; the teaching that God dwells in the Christian man, and that it is solely by virtue of this indwelling that he has the ability to exercise any spiritual force whatsoever. The thing which Jesus sought to impress upon the minds of His disciples was that whatsoever power they possessed, of whatsoever kind, would arise out of the fact that God dwelt in them; and that, as the Master said of Himself, they, of themselves, could do nothing. This was the thing on which, throughout, Jesus laid the emphasis. It was the thing on which, in His last and loftiest talk to His followers, He laid nearly all the emphasis. It was a truth which, in His thinking, assumed supreme and tremendous importance, as being the most significant one which could in any way affect human life. It was with this truth that Jesus associated His promise that

prayer would be answered and His promise that the disciples should do the works that He did. The church, it is true, has always accepted the teachings of Christ on this point; but this acceptance has been so vague that the church has never distinctly recognized the fundamental importance of this truth and has never realized the character of the expectations which should arise out of it.

Now, it seems obvious that we cannot formulate a law of Christian healing and put the emphasis anywhere else than where Christ put it; and the thing which He emphasized was not prayer as a power, and not faith as a power, but was the indwelling of God as a power.

One of the strangest things in the world is the way in which the church overlooks this truth; places its dependence somewhere else; fails to realize that if it deals with anything it must be with spiritual forces, and that, excepting the power of God, there is no spiritual energy in existence, aside from a strictly limited and unsatisfactory energy which the human soul may originate.

In considering this view, we should guard against the tendency of the mind to swing towards the extreme form of any idea which it may accept. I merely note the warning. It would seem quite sufficient to say that in the teachings of Jesus there is not the most remote hint of the

idea that God is all, or that the human soul is, in any way, identified with God, or that man is a mere manifestation of God or a "bundle of God's beliefs." The entire teaching of the Bible is that the soul is like God; and this is probably true in a much more real, and vastly larger, sense than we imagine; but, at the same time, we should beware of confusing similarity with identity.

Obviously, an attempt to define the relationship between God and the soul would be quite as hopeless as that of trying to say just what the nexus between the soul and the body is; or, imaginably, vastly more so. It is probable that many of our most familiar words and ideas are absolutely meaningness and without content as applied to life on the spiritual plane; and this, of itself, would raise an insuperable obstacle to any attempted definition of attitudes or relationships on that plane. There are, however, several things which we may consider in the light of plausible conjectures.

1. The dwelling of God in a soul is to be interpreted not in the sense of localization, but in that of manifestation. It does not mean that God is in contact with the soul, or even that there is an interpenetration of substance between God and the soul. It does mean the putting forth of divine energy which, somehow, is directed upon, or through, the soul.

An illustration will serve to make my meaning

clearer. We may suppose that God is in contact with, and that His substance pervades, a boulder. But, if He is there, He is also quiescent from age to age. He puts forth no energy which, so far as we can determine, in any way changes the structure of the rock or its relationship with its surroundings. We may also suppose that God's substance pervades the structure of a tree, which grows beside the boulder. But here, as is obvious, His presence means an entirely different thing from what it does in the rock; and this, entirely, because, in the tree, His presence is accompanied by a manifestation of energy, producing what we call growth; a transformation of structure and of the relationship of parts. We may then—though He is equally in contact with both and though He equally pervades both—broadly distinguish between the way in which God dwells in the tree and the way in which He dwells in the boulder. And this may serve to clarify a truth which, probably, holds on the spiritual plane. It is perfectly supposable that God may equally be in contact with two souls, and that He may equally pervade two souls, but that He may, in the sense which Jesus had in mind and meant to convey, dwell in the one and not in the other; the difference arising out of the fact that in one case there is some manifestation of divine energy directed upon or through the soul, and that in the other case there is not.

2. It has always been assumed by the teachers of Christianity that all souls of all men, considered as independent entities, are at par; equally intelligent, equally powerful and possessing equal possibilities of development. The facts upon which this conclusion is based, and the reasoning by which it is reached, are to me mysterious. I cannot even conjecture an existing basis for the supposition.

Reasoning from what we know of the soul, we should reach a very different conclusion. Suppose, for example, we start with the ascertained fact that the soul has an absolutely perfect memory; that its content at any given time is the sum of all previous intellectual and emotional contents of the conscious mind. In any given case, this may mean that enormous doubts, fears and falsehoods have passed into the soul and there, as suggestions, have been transformed into impulses on which the soul has struggled to act; and we cannot but suppose that any such struggle, in itself and in its outcome, must be damaging.

If it were not possible—and that very really and seriously—to damage the soul, many of the sayings of Jesus would seem to be trivial and to have no particular application in life. Repeatedly and emphatically, the Master warned His followers against such things as doubt, fear, anger, anxiety. But why? Because of the prejudicial influence these things would have on

the body? We can hardly suppose that. Or on the conscious mind? It is difficult to imagine the Master as so solicitous for the welfare, merely, of man's intellectual equipment. It is much more reasonable and to the point to suppose that the solicitude of Jesus was for the soul, the only part of man the condition of which He seemed to consider really significant; that He knew that certain ideas and emotions, because they would there be transformed into hurtful forces, would damage the soul; and that this damage would be tremendously serious and difficult to repair. The immense importance of this in the mind of Jesus is, perhaps, nowhere brought out more clearly than in His saying, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." It does not, on the face of it, seem a very serious thing to offend a child. A child's mental hurts are not deep, and he recovers from them rapidly. Yet Jesus said that it would be better for a man to have a millstone hanged about his neck, and to be cast into the depths of the sea, than to do precisely that trivial thing. There is no possible way in which we can understand this except by supposing that an offense given to a child somehow damages its soul, at a time when such damage is peculiarly harmful and difficult to repair.

Asking the reader to make due allowance for the misleading nature of the words I am obliged to use, I will say that Jesus seemed to regard doubt, anxiety, fear and all such things as spiritual diseases, which may attack the soul, as fever or consumption may attack the body; which, similarly, may weaken it; which may reduce it to a condition of helplessness; which may bewilder it into something analogous to insanity; which, if recovered from, may leave the soul debilitated; or which, on the other hand, may destroy it; though I use the word destroy not as synonymous with annihilate, nor in any other definite sense. I regard it as plainly indicated in the teachings of Jesus that souls, both incarnate and discarnate, may be diseased, malformed, even monstrous; this because they are influenced by hurtful forces, or are not sufficiently moulded by beneficent forces, during that period of gestation which precedes birth on the spiritual plane.

3. We may reasonably suppose that the dwelling of God in a soul is a thing of degrees; the intensity of the divine energy exerted upon or through a soul being graduated in proportion to the moral condition of the soul. The Scriptures say of Christ: "God gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him." It is implied that, in other cases, the Spirit may be, and is, given by measure; and all the phenomena of the

Christian life seem to confirm this truth. There are variations of spiritual experience and gradations of spiritual power for which it is difficult to account in any other way.

We have now reached a point in our discussion where it is possible to lay down some propositions, which will show us where we are and whither we are tending.

1. The ability to exercise any spiritual energy, including that which heals disease, depends on the dwelling of God in the life.

2. As I shall show presently, the dwelling of God in the life depends on what, to put it in a single word, I shall call saintship.

3. Therefore, if it is possible to formulate a law of Christian healing, it must be on the basis of saintship.

It should be understood that I do not use the word saintship in any merely canonical sense. Men and women have been elevated to the position of saints in the church for various and often insufficient reasons. The kind of saint I wish to take into account is the person of such disposition and character that God can dwell in him and work through him; and, as we may easily satisfy ourselves, there is but one New Testament definition of this order of saint. This definition is to the effect that such a saint is a person who keeps the words of Christ.

Here are some of the sayings of Jesus:

"If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." —John 14:28.

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." —John 14:21.

"He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings."—John 14:24.

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7.

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love."—John 15:10.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John 15: 14.

These sayings serve to show that Jesus associated what I have called saintship with one, and only one, thing, the keeping of His words (or His commandments); and nowhere in His teachings, or in the writings of His personal followers, is it associated with anything else.

We have here, then, a way of accounting for the fact that the church cannot heal disease, or do a variety of other things which require spiritual energy; and a much more satisfactory way than by saying that the faith of the church in its ability to accomplish a particular thing is

weak. We are confronted by a vastly more important question than that. Does the church comply with the one condition on which Jesus said that God would dwell in men? Do Christians keep the words of Christ?

It is easy, in a vague and general way, to answer this question in the affirmative; but if it be presented, so to speak, in a bill of particulars, it may be necessary for us to change our opinion. For example, we may ask, do those who, in the modern church, are regarded as representative Christians rejoice when they are reviled and persecuted; do they agree with adversaries quickly; do they leave their gifts before the altar until they go and are reconciled with their alienated brethren; do they turn the other cheek to one who smites; do they go the second mile, when not compelled to do so; do they love their enemies; do they do good to those who hate them; do they, in almsgiving, keep their left hands from knowing about their right hands; do they decline to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth; do they take no thought for what they shall eat and drink, and for raiment; do they genuinely set the kingdom of God first; do they absolutely decline to judge; do they consider the beams in their own eyes, before referring to the motes in the eyes of their brethren?

But these are the words of Jesus; and He said

that the dwelling of God in a life depended on keeping His words.

I do not wish to be understood as indulging in that cheap, rhetorical arraignment of the modern Christian life which is at once so common and so ineffective in bringing about any change of religious attitude. There are numberless Christians who, most scrupulously, are trying to shape their conduct and to determine their relationships by the words of Jesus; the outcome of this effort being, of course, more or less modified by those traditional and ingrained mistakes and prejudices which colour all human thinking. At the same time, it will probably be admitted, even by those who are conscious of failure at this precise point, that the church, as a church, does not keep the words of Christ and, touching many of them, does not even seriously consider the advisability of doing this. It will be admitted that the church, as a church, is still in bondage to that profound error of regarding the moral system of Jesus as idealistic and not adapted to the conditions of modern life; and of trying to secure the salvation of the soul along a line of less resistance than the real teaching of Jesus seems to offer. In religion, as everywhere else, the human mind and effort have always sought to move along the line of least resistance; and the church, unfortunately, once opened a line which merely skirted the

edge of the moral system of Jesus, and then curved towards a celestial terminus; a mistake in theological engineering which, having once been made, it is enormously difficult to rectify, as nearly all passengers prefer that route.

I am not, however, discussing the matter of human salvation, of what it means or of the way in which it may be accomplished. My sole purpose is that of pointing out that the church, as a church, does not possess the power of healing disease, or any other purely spiritual power, in anything like the degree we might reasonably expect if God exerted His energy upon or through Christian lives in the way which Jesus evidently had in mind when He spoke of God dwelling in men. Prayer is not, in the hands of the church, anything like the effective agency which the indwelling of God would make it. Faith is not, in the hands of the church, anything like the tremendously powerful force which the indwelling of God would make it. Preaching is not, in the hands of the church, anything like the converting force of which Jesus was thinking when He said to His disciples, "Go teach all nations—and I am with you alway." The weakness is not in lack of equipment or of effort; but, entirely, in a limited manifestation of divine energy through the lives of Christians. It is essentially a spiritual weakness; and a very satisfactory and complete explanation of

it is found in the fact that the church has not yet realized the absolute necessity of keeping Christ's words, the one essential condition of divine indwelling which the Master mentioned. We have not yet seen what would happen if Christians began to live precisely as Jesus told them to live and if they began to do exactly what He told them to do.

We may now sum up the entire argument in a few propositions:

1. Saintship means keeping the words of Jesus.

2. The dwelling of God in a life depends on saintship, and is in proportion to the degree of saintliness.

3. This indwelling of God is necessary in order to heal disease, as Jesus healed it.

4. Therefore, if there is a law of Christian healing, it is this: The ability to heal disease depends on saintship, and is powerful in proportion to the degree of personal saintliness.

I have no hesitation in saying that this is the only statement of the law of Christian healing which will harmonize with the history of genuine, miraculous cures. The apostles worked miracles of healing, very like those of the Master. How did they do it? I reply, they did it not of themselves; the God who dwelt in them did the works. They were men of child-like minds, who lived absolutely above the world,

and to whom the words of Jesus were authoritative as the laws of Moses were to the Israelities; and they were, therefore, able to exert remarkable spiritual power, not only in the way of healing disease, but also in preaching, in prayer and in faith.

Also, in my best judgment, and in the light of the evidence for and against, there have been at least occasional instances of genuine ability to heal disease throughout the entire course of the history of Christianity. But, in every such instance, the healer has been a saint; that is, a person of such disposition and character that God could, and did, dwell in him and work through him.

It may occur to the reader that the same objection I raised against a law of healing based on faith, or on prayer, will lie against a law of healing based on saintship. This objection was that, no matter to what point of intensity faith might be carried, the view of God as to the desirability of healing any particular case might differ from that of the person exercising the faith. This objection does not, however, lie against a law of healing based on saintship. One of the things which Jesus explicitly set forth was that the dwelling of God in a life would mean not only ability to exert spiritual power, but also intellectual enlightenment; the harmonizing of the divine and the human view. He told His followers

that the Holy Spirit, when given to them, would lead them into all truth. Jesus said, referring to the Holy Spirit, "He shall take of Mine (My thoughts, views and purposes) and shall show it unto you." The Master, further, said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This shows that, given the indwelling of God, Jesus did not contemplate even the possibility of a divergence between the divine and the human view. And the Master's meaning, evidently, was not that, under the circumstances He described, God would subordinate His will to a human will, but that, under these circumstances, the human will would be brought into complete accord with the divine will; and we cannot imagine such a blending of wills unless there is also a similarly complete blending of thoughts and purposes. To attempt a discussion of how this is brought about would be, simply, to lose ourselves in a maze of metaphysical speculation. The truth itself, however, is one upon which Jesus placed His unqualified endorsement, and is also one which may be made a matter of personal experimentation.

I have said that a genuine healer is always a saint; but the converse of this proposition is not true. A genuine saint is not always a healer. This fact was observed, very early in the history of Christianity, by the Apostle Paul, whose in-

sight into the mystery of spiritual forces was much deeper than that of any other man of his time. In the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul sets forth two leading propositions: (1) that all spiritual energy is due to the indwelling of God and (2) that the energy of God, when operating through different human personalities, may produce widely divergent results. The statement of the Apostle is as follows: "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all (that is, which worketh everything that is found in every saint). For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will."

This is not only a statement of religious truth, but is also a profoundly scientific observation; and one to which nature furnishes numberless analogies. The force which we call the life of the vegetable world, operating through different trees, produces widely divergent results. In one case, the culmination of its activity is in the production of an apple; in another, of an orange; in

another, of a walnut; and so endlessly. This is owing to minute, and as yet undefined, differences in the cellular structure of the trees, which modify the operation of the life force and cause its activity to culminate in the formation of fruits which are distinctly unlike. Now, as the Apostle points out, this same thing is true in the operation of the divine energy through human personalities; and this, probably, is owing to minute and undiscoverable differences in the constitution of these personalities.

The law of Christian healing, based on saintship, is, therefore, modified by the fact that every saint is not a healer; and we must amend our statement of the law in order to embody this truth. The revised, and I think ultimate, statement of the law is: The ability to heal disease depends on saintship on the part of a person of that peculiar constitution which causes the divine energy, operating through him, to take the form of a curative force; and the intensity of this force is in proportion to the degree of personal saintliness.

I believe this to be the final expression of the law of healing as this ability is based in the human personality. An attempt to go beyond, or behind, this would merely bring us face to face with the impossibility of defining divine energy.

X

ATTITUDE TOWARDS HEALING

AS ability to heal disease depends on saintship, it is a purely personal possession, belonging to the individual saint; and, therefore, we may dismiss the idea that this power resides in any organization, school or cult, or that it arises out of any theology, philosophy or system of thought. It is certain, indeed, that many of the healing cults (notably Christian Science) stand in their own light by impressing certain philosophies, of an absurd kind, on the minds of their followers. This is true because there are intellectual, as well as moral, virtues; the intellectual virtues being those of clearness, candour and care. These may not be so vitally important as the moral virtues of truthfulness and honesty; but they are important enough to be essentials in the attainment of saintship. It is almost as difficult to imagine a saint who is intellectually muddled as it is to imagine one who is morally perverted.

The attitude of the church towards healing is a curious and contradictory one. Theoretically, it holds that the curing of physical disease is one of the functions of Christianity; but it is incredulous and impatient of any practical attempt to exercise this function. For example, the pastor of the present day, self-respecting church who should attempt to comply with the New Testament injunction to anoint the sick with oil would be regarded as a crank by his parishioners. The bot-

tle of oil would injure his ministerial standing. As a result, the matter of trying to heal disease is left in the hands of people whose eccentricities, extravagances and absurdities tend to bring the whole mattter into contempt. If it wishes to arrive at the truth, the church should substitute experiment for incredulity.

As Jesus did not regard the healing of disease as an essential element in His system of truth, there is no reason why the church should think of it as necessary in order to prove its claims. Christianity never has made, and never can make, its way by force of exhibiting miracles ; even granting that it has them to exhibit. One of the curious things about the human mind in its relation to wonderful works is that, after witnessing such phenomena, and being convinced by them, it experiences a recession of belief and returns to an attitude of incredulity. Then, too, we should remember that the working of a genuine miracle, of any imaginable kind, would not demonstrate the truth of Christianity. It would only serve to show that the person who performed the miracle was a saint and that the energy of God operated through him ; and this would be but a small section of the system of truth which Christianity asks men to accept.

The church might, however, very seriously consider the advisability of attempting to heal disease purely as a benevolence ; and might, wisely, keep the possibility of attaining an ability to heal before its adherents as a reason, among others, for cultivating saintship.

DATE DUE

MAR 1 3 1978

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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F553

Fitzgerald, David Bruce
AUTHOR

The law of Christian healing.
TITLE

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F553 Fitzgerald, David Bruce
The law of Christian
healing.

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